

Preparing for Moscow and Nixon's Trip to China, January 1–March 29, 1972

35. Editorial Note

From January 3 to 10, 1972, Deputy Assistant to the President Alexander Haig visited the People's Republic of China to prepare for President Nixon's visit scheduled for February. While responsible for facilitating arrangements for the trip, Haig also emphasized to Chinese Premier Chou En-lai that U.S. representations and threats had forced the Soviet Union to pressure India to end hostilities in South Asia. In a January 3 meeting with Chou En-lai, Haig stated:

"We believe and we have very strong confirmation that those steps were effective in convincing the Soviet Union to influence the Indians to accept a cease-fire rather than to proceed with attacks against West Pakistan—in other words to stop short of what had been their goal in West Pakistan. One of those steps was Dr. Kissinger's reference to the possible cancellation of the President's Moscow trip if the conflict continued. Since the cease-fire has gone into effect, we have made a very careful assessment of the overall implications of recent events on the subcontinent and we have concluded that up until recently the Soviet policy on the subcontinent had been, in general, to keep the subcontinent divided. This was manifested in their performance during the earlier conflict between India and Pakistan but we think they have decided on a rather precipitous shift in their policy to adopt one in which they would now seek to encircle the PRC with unfriendly states. We believe that this modified Soviet strategy has evolved as a result of recent events and has caused them to overhaul their former strategy for the subcontinent. We also noted when the crisis developed that the Soviets tried very hard to divert us from the course that would converge with the policy of the People's Republic. In short, they sought to influence us to maintain a hands off policy. During the period when this crisis started to develop, they invited Dr. Kissinger to Moscow personally on several occasions as guest of Mr. Brezhnev. They also offered to reach agreements with us in the accidental attack and provocative attack areas, all of which we rejected. We rejected these approaches by the Soviet Union on two grounds—one was on the issue of principle. We felt we had certain obligations with respect to Pakistan and we felt we could not tolerate use of force to dismantle that country. But we also rejected the Soviet approaches because we felt that the future viability of the PRC was of the greatest interest to us and a matter of our own national interest."

Haig also added:

“In the context of what I have just said, we have concluded that the continuation of the war in Southeast Asia can only give Moscow an opportunity to increase its influence in Hanoi and to further the encirclement of the People’s Republic. We feel strongly that Moscow is urging Hanoi in the direction of continued military action and as such, they are forging another link in the chain which is designed to constrain the People’s Republic. In all of these circumstances, we also believe that President Nixon’s visit takes on a new and immediate significance which transcends its earlier importance. In the context of these events I have just described, i.e., the immediate effect to the People’s Republic and the revised Soviet strategy, the President’s visit is not only one of long term historic significance—the original motivation and the guiding force underlying the visit—but now we see an immediate significance which must now be considered with respect to the President’s visit. In light of our own strategic interests—America’s strategic interests which I described earlier—we are convinced of and dedicated to the proposition that the viability of the People’s Republic should be maintained.”

In turn, Chou responded that “Soviet meddling in the South Asian subcontinent and in Indochina, in my opinion, is not due to a change in the strategic policies of the Soviet Union but rather a necessary consequence of reaction on the part of the Soviet Union toward the coming closer between China and the United States.” A record of this conversation is in *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, volume XVII, China, 1969–1972, Document 183.

36. Editorial Note

On January 14, 1972, Assistant to the President Henry Kissinger sent a memorandum to Secretary of State William Rogers that reads:

“The President has directed that henceforth meetings with representatives of the Soviet Embassy in Washington on any topic and with representatives of foreign governments on the Middle East situation be cleared with him. In conjunction with these clearances, the President wishes to have a memorandum outlining the objective of the meeting and the manner in which it will be conducted. Following the meeting, the President wishes to have a written memorandum for the record covering the contents of the decision.” (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR)

In his memoirs Kissinger noted that during January “Summit preparation speeded up, and, as usual, they started with an internal

row over who would supervise them, Secretary of State Rogers or I. By this time our relations had so deteriorated that there was no longer any pretense that it could be done jointly.” (*White House Years*, page 1127) The impetus for the January 14 instruction was the growing lack of communication between Kissinger and Rogers which had developed into a “problem.” In his diary entry for January 3, White House Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman wrote:

“The Attorney General [John Mitchell] had breakfast with Henry this morning, so he had the latest batch of Henry’s input, although I had met with Henry also during the day today. Henry boiled it down to the point that he’s got to have his demands met. First of all, that Rogers has to understand that any attack on K[issinger] by the State Department or any of its people is a direct attack on the P[resident]. Second, that all cables and communications out of State must be cleared at the White House first. Third, that there is to be no communication between State and the Soviets without prior knowledge of the White House and without a memcon afterwards summarizing everything that was discussed. Henry feels these are probably impossible demands, and therefore he’ll have to leave, but he won’t do so until after the Russian trip. In discussing this, the P understood Henry’s view. I went further than the Attorney General and told the P about Henry’s further view that the P had lost confidence in him and that the evidence, at least to Henry, was the fact that the P was constantly trying to butter him up and keep him happy and was not really getting into the nitty gritty of foreign policy anymore. Henry sees this as slippage in his own standing, and that probably is what worries him more than anything else. That, plus the fact that he knows he made the mistake in India–Pakistan and doesn’t know how to cope with it. In any event, the P agreed that we should put the ultimatum to Rogers and agreed with my recommendation that Mitchell and I do it as soon as we get back from San Clemente.” (*The Haldeman Diaries: Multimedia Edition*)

According to Haldeman’s diary entry of January 10, Kissinger was so upset that he considered quitting by January 27. The next day, Haldeman noted Rogers’ feeling that “Henry has lied to him, and he has admitted it, saying he was lying under orders, and that’s the only time he did lie, but that leads Rogers to distrust everything Henry says.” (*Ibid.*) On January 13 Haldeman recorded that Nixon wanted Haig “to take a very hard line with Henry” because “it’s better for him to blow now than after Russia, and if we don’t face up to it now he may go off cockeyed during the [1972 Presidential] campaign, as he did in ‘68.” (*Ibid.*) Three days later, Haldeman observed:

“Because K goes in and complains to the P all the time, he gets his way. Rogers doesn’t complain, so he gets left out. He said he’d be glad to sit down together with the P and Henry to work together on this thing. That we’ve got to work it out, but he sees no reason why he should be kept out. He agrees that State people have to be kept out of some things, but not Bill. He says he’s had newspaper people tell him what the NSC people have said to them, but he doesn’t care about that.

He says the P knows all about the Israel stuff, that he has memos from the P about what he should do. That the policy in the Middle East has been good, and he will not have Henry second-guessing him all the time. He's happy to keep the P fully advised. Says the meetings he's had with [Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak] Rabin were pursuant to a directive from the P. He doesn't want the thing to end up as if State is withholding things. The main thing is that K doesn't keep Rogers advised at all on what he's doing. For instance, he knows nothing about the Russia and China trips except what Al [Haig] told him the other day. Therefore, he will disregard the instructions from K; he's not working for K. If the P wants to tell him, 'I don't want you to know about Russia' and so forth, at least he'll know where he stands, but when the P says 'I want Bill to know everything,' then he expects to know it, without K screwing it up." (Ibid.)

In his diary entry for January 16, Haldeman noted that he received a telephone call from Rogers who stated:

"I have a preemptory note memo from Henry and I won't take it. I have orders from the P and I'm following those. I thought we had an understanding here that this was a two-way thing. The theory is that the P has announced his policy, the State Department's carrying it out. He doesn't mind checking with Henry if Henry agrees to check with him too, and now he wants to talk to the P about it. He thinks it's hurting the whole situation." (Ibid.)

Haldeman noted in his diary entry for January 18 that he and Attorney General John Mitchell "agreed that the only way to solve this was a memorandum from the P to both Rogers and K" that would propose a process for keeping Rogers informed while at the same time cement White House control over foreign-policy making. In devising the memorandum, Nixon suggested the following additional language (later excised by Haldeman and Mitchell):

"It's necessary for all of us to consult closely with each other, and it's imperative that I be informed. I cannot and don't want to become involved in matters that are not of importance. But on three major issues, China, Russia and Middle East, I want to be totally and completely informed at all times, so I've asked Haldeman to set up a procedure under this where I want to see all of the advance notice, and so on. That will keep both of you informed on whatever activities I may undertake independently but I anticipate none at this time. The only winner from our failure to work together would be our enemies both at home and abroad. I hope we can all subordinate our personal considerations for these higher goals." (Ibid.)

Haldeman added that "both Henry and Mitchell feel it's ridiculous for the P to subordinate himself in this fashion." (Ibid.)

In a January 19 memorandum to Rogers and Kissinger, Nixon established a "basic operating procedure" with regard to issues relating to the Soviet Union, as well as China, the Middle East, Cuba, and Chile. He directed that he be informed of and approve any proposed actions

taken on these matters beforehand and that all meetings with representatives from these areas be cleared with him in advance. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, President's Personal Files, Box 3, Memoranda from the President, 1969–1974, Memos–January 1972) On January 20 Haldeman made the following notation in his diary:

“Earlier today, right after the Cabinet meeting, I gave Bill Rogers the directive from the P and Henry wanted put out that orders him to notify the P in advance of all meetings with Russians, Chinese, etc., and Rogers obviously didn’t like it very well, and leaped into my office with the Attorney General and we had some discussion of it. He’s making the point that the real problem here, still, is how we make sure that Henry keeps him informed of things. It’s just impossible to get through to him the point that there’s a difference between keeping the Secretary informed and keeping the P informed, but I guess if we keep hammering away it will work out.” (*The Haldeman Diaries: Multimedia Edition*)

37. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, January 17, 1972.

SUBJECT

The Pace of Our Negotiations with the Soviets: Relationship to China Trip and Moscow Summit

As you are aware, there are currently in circulation in the agencies, the press and academic community a number of theories about how the White House wants (or should want) our negotiations with the Soviets paced in relation to the China trip and the Moscow summit. Some suspect (or argue) that we should withhold major agreements with the Soviets before the China trip in order not to arouse Chinese suspicions or, conversely, in order to give the Soviets an incentive for concessions. Others argue that we should reach certain agreements with the Soviets in order to make the Chinese more forthcoming. Then there is the school that feels that all good things should be saved for the President in

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 717, Country Files, Europe, USSR, Vol. XVII. Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. Sent for action.

May and we should therefore stall the more substantive negotiations until then and leave it to the President to consummate them. There are others who feel that we should amass as many agreements as possible before the May summit so that the atmosphere will be good, the President can use most of his time to talk about fundamentals and the final outcome will be to provide an agenda for the next phase. Still others worry that if too many issues are left unresolved the President may be under pressure to make last-minute and possibly unwise concessions to get agreements in May and this will be bad for the country and in any case cause him more trouble on the domestic right. Curiously enough, almost everyone claims to have a White House signal on which he bases his preferred tactic.²

There is, of course, some merits in most of these ideas, even where they are mutually exclusive. But it is never easy—and certainly not in this Government—to fine-tune one's diplomacy in this fashion. Moreover, it takes two to tango and Soviet calculations of what is optimal timing from their standpoint will frequently run diametrically opposite to ours.

I think therefore our best rule of thumb continues to be to conduct negotiations on their merit. It certainly is the best public posture and the least confusing one for providing guidance to the agencies. We discussed this briefly before Christmas when Brzezinski³ claimed that the working level at State was going on the assumption we wanted as many agreements as possible before May. Since that time I have, as we agreed, taken the line in IG and other meetings that we do not want negotiations with the Soviets either speeded up or delayed because of the May summit; that above all we want sound substantive positions and that negotiations once begun should be conducted on their merit.

*Unless this gives you a problem, I would like to continue taking this line and hope you will also when the SRG considers NSSM 143 (Review of US-Soviet Negotiations).*⁴

² In a year-end review transmitted in telegram 136 from Moscow, January 6, the Embassy noted: "China has emerged as a potent competitor on the diplomatic scene with its anti-Soviet bent if anything intensified. Changes in the U.S.-Chinese relationship have made China even a more key factor in Soviet security calculations. The President's initiative toward China, together with the further winding down of the Vietnam war, has given the U.S. greater policy freedom, and Moscow added incentive, to engage in serious negotiations on SALT and a broad range of other issues." (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL US-USSR)

³ Zbigniew Brzezinski, Director, Research Institute for International Change, Columbia University and Consultant to the Department of State.

⁴ See Document 48. Haig signed the approve option for Kissinger.

38. Conversation Between President Nixon and His Assistant
for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, January 20, 1972.

Kissinger: Dobrynin called me.

Nixon: He did?

Kissinger: Yeah. Through Haig. Said he had a—he needs a long conversation with me. I made some jokes about India—Pakistan. He said, “Let’s put it behind us. Let’s work positively for the future.” And I’m having dinner with him tomorrow night.

Nixon: So he doesn’t appear to be negative about it?

Kissinger: Not at all. No. One massive problem we have is in Vietnam. We had a message from Abrams today. They’re putting in every reserve unit they have. Everything. They’re stripping North Vietnam.

Nixon: The North Vietnamese?

Kissinger: Yeah, they’re stripping it bare and—

Nixon: What can we do?

Kissinger: Well, he wants to bomb the southern part of North Vietnam where they have their logistic buildup. So we’ve got to look at it tomorrow. I want to talk to Dobrynin and tell him, “Look, if this offensive”—of course, they want to put it to us.

Nixon: I think they want to put it to us. My view is that we may have to risk the Chinese thing, Henry. I—

Kissinger: It’s my view too, Mr. President.

Nixon: I just don’t believe you can let them knock the shit out of us. I mean, the Chinese—the Chinese aren’t going to cancel the trip.

Kissinger: No.

Nixon: They’re not going to cancel the trip because—

Kissinger: I don’t think you should go quite as far north but we should, as we did in the last attacks—I think we should let him do something. I think we—

Nixon: Henry, you remember I—

Kissinger: Particularly after your peace speech.² I don’t think you should do it.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Oval Office, Conversation No. 652–17. No classification marking. According to his Daily Diary, Nixon met Kissinger in the Oval Office from 6:08–6:36 p.m. The editors transcribed the portion of the conversation printed here specifically for this volume.

² For Nixon’s January 25 “peace” speech, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1972*, pp. 100–106.

Nixon: Wouldn't do it now. We'll wait until after the peace speech. I think you're right.

Kissinger: I'd wait until they've—

Nixon: Did they respond with—to our speech with increased buildup?

Kissinger: Yeah.

Nixon: I think so too.

Kissinger: That's my understanding.

Nixon: Just simply—What does Abrams—does Abrams have a plan?

Kissinger: Well, he has targets. And I think they probably are going to make an all out—and then they're going to settle. If they don't tip it then, they're going to settle. They're going to settle either way, because if they win, of course, they're going to—and if they don't make it, then they're going to—

Nixon: When you speak in terms of the win, what are they doing? What do you envision?

Kissinger: Well, what they could wind up doing is have a massive attack in the II Corps and come across the DMZ and across the—and go all out in I Corps. Now we ought to be able to handle it with massive air. If they go across the DMZ, of course, they'd be violating the understanding totally.

Nixon: Yes.

Kissinger: And, of course it's also conceivable that Dobrynin brings us a message tomorrow. I don't really believe it. Not on Vietnam. He's—But he was very conciliatory and very—somewhat apologetic.

Nixon: About what?

Kissinger: India–Pakistan.

Nixon: You think so?

Kissinger: Yeah. I said to him, "You know, Anatoly, every time you leave town I know you're doing something mischievous 'cause every time you're out of town things are in crisis. He said, "Oh, I can tell you some interesting things." He said, "Let's put it behind us. But as a friend, I'll give you a lot of explanations which will—" ³

Nixon: He'll probably say that Kuznetsov tried—

Kissinger: Well that I believe. But that, in fact, there's no doubt. Because we have the telegram from the Soviet Ambassador to India,

³ In a telephone conversation between Kissinger and Dobrynin, January 20. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

Pegov, who told the Indians on Friday, which was the 10th that they should take Kashmir as quickly as possible. And on Sunday Kutznetsov showed up and everything began to turn. So the signals were clearly changed after your conversations with that Agricultural Minister.⁴

Nixon: [unclear]

Kissinger: There's no question. No question.

Nixon: Let me ask you, is there anything that—there's nothing you can do with Dobrynin on that damn Vietnam thing. Not a damn thing—

Kissinger: Well, I'm gonna . . . Well, I'll see him tomorrow.

Nixon: You're going to have to see him tomorrow night?

Kissinger: Tomorrow night. For dinner. I'll call you.

Nixon: Is your present thinking though that we still go ahead Tuesday night? That's what we want to do?

Kissinger: I think so. Oh, no question about that.

Nixon: [unclear] I mean, in relation to the Dobrynin conversation, will that change anything?

Kissinger: Well, unless he has a message that they are ready to start talking in which case—but that's inconceivable to me. They wouldn't send it through him.

Nixon: You think that what they're really doing is—what Abrams says is a massive buildup?

Kissinger: Biggest buildup in 4 years. Every reserve division they've got. Literally, they've stripped it. If we could land one division up North we could drive to Hanoi.

Nixon: And where are they all? He says—

Kissinger: Well they're coming down—

Nixon: How'd they get there so fast?

Kissinger: Well some are on the train and some are just north of the DMZ. And they've built a road across the DMZ, which they don't need for infiltration—

Nixon: Well what the hell. Why aren't we hitting the road?

Kissinger: Mr. President, this has been one of the—

Nixon: What in the name of God are we doing about the road?

Kissinger: Well, oh yeah, we are bombing it. But it's one of the worst disgraces, that here the great U.S. Air Force can't keep a road from being built. They still haven't finished it completely so I don't think they'll start the DMZ attack yet. Our judgment is, or the intelligent judgment is, that they'll start their attacks in Vietnam in February, and in the

⁴ Nixon met with Soviet Minister of Agriculture Vladimir Matskevich on December 9, 1971; see Document 23.

Second Corps area in March, and the I Corps area. I think they'll have knocked it off by May 1st. They will not—My judgment is that the Russians will not want you to come to Moscow—They'd like you to be in Peking.

Nixon: Peking—

Kissinger: With egg on your face. But, if we set up these negotiations on the Middle East properly, they'll need you to deliver on it. If you're the one that delivers, you need to be strong. If we—That's why we have to set up trade and the Middle East in such a way that you are the one that has to deliver it after the election.

Nixon: Coming back to this immediate problem, I see no choice but to, do what Abrams recommends on that. The—

Kissinger: We kicked the Russians in the teeth when we had to for the national interest and we'll have to do it to the Chinese.

Nixon: That's right.

Kissinger: But I'd do it after the peace offensive.

Nixon: Yeah. Yeah, I think you're right. That isn't going to make that much difference, is it?

Kissinger: I think we should send a note to the Chinese when you give your speech and a note to the Russians. And—

Nixon: If they'll [unclear] escalation we will have to respond in kind?

Kissinger: Yeah. And we hope—

Nixon: It's not [unclear] against them.

Kissinger: And we hope that they'll use the affair to help us . . . to help our settlement.

Nixon: Who will you do that through? Have Walters deliver it in Paris?

Kissinger: Walters in Paris and I can give it to Dobrynin on Tuesday⁵ just before your speech.⁶

Nixon: I'd do it beforehand. That's what I'd do. I really would.

Kissinger: Well, the warning I can give Dobrynin tomorrow, but I think the speech with the request—we don't want to—

Nixon: Yes, yes, I know.

Kissinger: Because otherwise—

Nixon: What will you tell him tomorrow?

Kissinger: Well, I'll tell him—

⁵ January 25.

⁶ For the full text of the "Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union," see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1972*, pp. 41–74.

Nixon: Do we think, for example, that our air strike did any good? We do, don't we?

Kissinger: Yeah. I'll tell him that what—I'll say now look, you've watched the President. Time and again he's done things, which you would have not predicted. Run enormous risks, and I'll tell you now he's going to do it again if this Vietnam offensive comes off at the scale at which we're now seeing it develop.

Nixon: Incidentally, what are the South Vietnamese doing in terms of preparing to meet the offensive? Are they—

Kissinger: Well, he's changed a commander of the second—of two of the divisions in II Corps.

Nixon: Has he?

Kissinger: Yeah.

Nixon: Has he—the commander change been—They must be pretty good now, the South Vietnamese.

Kissinger: Well, in I Corps they're pretty good but that's where they may run into a lot of tanks. This may be a replay of the—

Nixon: We have tanks there now, remember? We've been delivering tanks to [unclear].

Kissinger: No, no. That should be a gory battle but, you know, it would be a lot of publicity in this country.

Nixon: Look, if it doesn't involve Americans, it's all right. They're going to have publicity on it anyway.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to the Moscow summit.]

Kissinger: I told Dobrynin—I said, "I saw you applauding the defense program part." He said, "No, you must have been watching this [unclear]."

Nixon: Did he say anything?

Kissinger: I said it as a joke. I knew he hadn't applauded. But it was a good story.

Nixon: Well, we had one little hooker in there, for the good of the Russians too. We said, "We're for limitation of arms, looking to the future." We want to reduce arms. Dobrynin should know that.

Kissinger: Oh, yeah.

Nixon: That we're willing to talk about that.

Kissinger: Mr. President—

Nixon: He didn't object to the speech, did he?

Kissinger: Oh, no.

Nixon: [unclear]

Kissinger: Mr. President, I have—one thing is clear to me ever since my meeting with the [Soviet] Cultural Minister [Ekaterina A. Furtseva].

What we did in India–Pakistan, I don’t care what it does here, we’ve got new respect from the Russians. She’s now sent me presents and a note of [unclear].

Nixon: Did she?

Kissinger: Yeah.

Nixon: Great.

Kissinger: And Dobrynin. I can tell how he slobbers. He says, “I have some very interesting communications for you and it’s terribly important. We have a big agenda. Let’s get right to work.” And he wanted to come for breakfast, as you know. He said—but he said he needs most of the morning, so I said, no, why don’t we do it—

Nixon: At least it’s—at least the summit is still on. You know, you hear about these people that—I—

Kissinger: I told your staff this morning that I thought we would have more results—

Nixon: They kept saying—they kept saying, “Well, because of India–Pakistan Dobrynin will come back and tell you to go to hell.” Well if they do then we know where we are.

Kissinger: Mr. President, there is absolutely no chance—

Nixon: They’ve got [unclear].

Kissinger: He told me—I had told his minister, his Trade Minister—I dropped in at Sam’s for drinks with his Trade Minister and I said, “You know the President is prepared to do things that are beyond the imagination of everybody. On the other hand, if you don’t stop these propaganda attacks on us, we can only conclude you—you want—you don’t want improved relations and in that case we’re not going to trade.” So we’ve got to get Dobrynin back. We’ve got to get him back. He’s the only guy that can straighten it out. And Dobrynin said he really had intended to stay another week, but they made him come back right after that conversation because they are determined to have this thing develop. So—

Nixon: Why don’t you talk to him about Vietnam and give, you could give ’em almost anything right now. The trade, of course, you could give them.

Kissinger: Oh, yeah.

Nixon: But damn it, they don’t want to play. I don’t know what we can do. We don’t have any cards there, Henry, nothing but the damned air force. We’ll use it. We’ve got to use the air force—

Kissinger: Mr. President, I think the demonstration of impotence, of getting them out of Vietnam physically—

Nixon: What’s that? I couldn’t hear you.

Kissinger: I mean—

Nixon: If the demonstration what?

Kissinger: Of being run out physically. It would be too great.

Nixon: Oh, we can't do it.

Kissinger: Of course, I think they will be—after this shot—I think they . . .

Nixon: They've got to settle.

Kissinger: Yeah. That's it.

Nixon: Don't you think so?

Kissinger: They've got to settle this summer. One way or the other. I think in making your planning, you can pretty well assume one way or the other it's going to be—

Nixon: [unclear] we get number three?

Kissinger: It's going to be—

Nixon: Remember we always talked in terms of two and three.

Kissinger: Well, we got the two. I think we'll get number three.

Nixon: You know, it's interesting when you think, when you put down, you read the little foreign policy section in that speech. It's a pretty goddamn good policy, isn't it?

Kissinger: It was very strong.

Nixon: Yeah.

Kissinger: And very thoughtful.

Nixon: And you know we've said our commitments will be minimal. We will not enter in militarily, but we will do this and that. And also we've got in—we'll use our military—we've got it all down there. People know exactly what we will do and what we won't do. And it's damn strong. And of course, as you know, the kicker is an interest.

Kissinger: Yeah.

Nixon: Oh. It's what—That means everybody gets it. I might decide that our interests were threatened in Bolivia, right?

Kissinger: It was no—

Nixon: See the interest is the thing that they—that the peaceniks will . . . Well, some of them will be smart. But a lot of peaceniks will say, "Ah, thank God we're not going to intervene." Bullshit. We'll intervene in any place—

Kissinger: [unclear]—

Nixon: If [unclear].

Kissinger: Well, with you as President, I—

Nixon: They'd be scared to death I might do something foolish.

Kissinger: Foolish hasn't been your record but something tough.

Nixon: I wish we could do something tough in Vietnam. I don't—Well, goddamn it. That air force plus the South Vietnamese should be

able to do it—I don't think the North Vietnamese are that strong. I can't believe—

Kissinger: We ought to do—

Nixon: —in Laos, in Cambodia they could be that strong.

Kissinger: What we ought to do is get a series of 1 or 2-day strikes. I don't think we can do 5 days at a clip, but—

Nixon: No, I—we can't—As I told you before, I really think that the last 2 days of the last [unclear] it wasn't fatal, but it didn't help us. I don't think it was worth [unclear] continuing. It looked like we just—Hit 'em for a couple of days and then stop. As you noticed that, we stopped the bombing. They quit talking about [unclear] for 3 days.

Kissinger: Yeah. In 2 days, we can do 1 week. And then 2 weeks later, another day. They've just got to—

Nixon: I think that the fact—the reason I asked you about the other one, Henry, I think the fact that we did that 5 day—

Kissinger: Oh, that was very—

Nixon: Gave them some pause.

Kissinger: Oh yeah—

Nixon: —Don't you think it worried them a little? They needed some [unclear].

Kissinger: I think we may have to hit them early in February. I don't think it's—

Nixon: Well that means next week maybe, though.

Kissinger: No, the week after your proposal.

Nixon: Oh, you want to wait that long?

Kissinger: Oh, maybe at the end of the week. I'd like to give your proposal a little more ride. I think they're going to—

Nixon: Yeah, I think we should let it ride the weekend, if we can. How about that?

Kissinger: And, if they hit us, then maybe we hit them for 5 days. You know, if they respond to your proposal with an all-out offensive.

Nixon: That's right. But we—and you're agreed you could hit that—I don't want to say—I don't want to threaten in my speech if you think I should.

Kissinger: No, you should not.

Nixon: I don't think I should be threatening at all in the speech.

Kissinger: No, no.

39. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, January 21, 1972, 8 p.m.–12 a.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Anatoli Dobrynin
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

The meeting lasted nearly four hours and was conducted in an atmosphere of effusive cordiality, buttressed by slugs of vodka and cans of caviar.

Dobrynin had just returned from the Soviet Union and had called me for an appointment.²

He began the conversation by telling me that he had just spent three days with Brezhnev at the Soviet version of Camp David, after having spent two days previously consulting with the Government to review the Soviet attitude towards the United States. Dobrynin described the physical layout of the Soviet equivalent of Camp David. He stressed that it did not have any houses earmarked for particular

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 2]. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. This meeting was held over dinner at the Soviet Embassy. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it. On January 28 Kissinger sent this memorandum and the attached letter to Nixon. A January 21 memorandum from Sonnenfeldt to Kissinger contained a briefing for this meeting. (Ibid.) On January 31 Haig sent Eliot a sanitized version of this memorandum of conversation that did not mention the Middle East, South Asia, summit preparations, trade, and Vietnam. (Ibid.) Kissinger recounts this meeting in *White House Years*, pp. 1126–1127.

² In a January 4 telephone conversation, Kissinger told Vorontsov that on important issues, especially regarding the upcoming Presidential trip to China, he was "not holding up because of other visits and we don't care if it's known" but was awaiting Dobrynin's return from consultations in Moscow. Vorontsov replied that Dobrynin was aware and "will have something for you" upon his return. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) In a January 20 telephone conversation, Kissinger chided Dobrynin upon his return: "When you leave town you are up to mischief." They arranged the next evening's dinner during the conversation. (Ibid.) In a January 21 telephone conversation at 10:30 a.m., Nixon instructed Kissinger: "Your line with him will be conciliatory on the big things but we cannot have the defensive. We will respond—at a level they don't expect. Let them think we will hit Haiphong." (Ibid.) In a January 22 telephone conversation, Kissinger told Nixon the conversation "went very well" and that the Soviets were aware of the consequences of their support for any precipitous North Vietnamese action. (Ibid.) In a conversation with Nixon, January 17, Kissinger noted that Gromyko had sent an oral message stating that Dobrynin's delay in returning to Washington was "in order to facilitate negotiations." Kissinger then stated: "Well, I think we're on a good course with them. They wouldn't have bothered with that if they didn't want to talk." Kissinger also noted that Vorontsov "was practically drooling over me" when the message was delivered. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, January 17, 1972, 11:30 a.m.–1:23 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 648–4)

individuals, but that Brezhnev used it more than anyone else, especially when he was preparing major speeches. This led him into a discussion of Alexandrov, who is Brezhnev's principal assistant. Dobrynin said it was amazing what role accident plays in careers. Alexandrov had been an official in the Embassy in Stockholm when Brezhnev, a relatively low-ranking member of the Politburo, needed a speech writer and he was assigned to him. Today, Alexandrov is the closest equivalent to me that the Soviet system has.

Dobrynin then brought the conversation around to a discussion of topics in Soviet-American relations.

Vietnam

I began with Vietnam. I said that as a general matter it had been difficult for us to understand Soviet behavior in the fall. We were extremely unhappy about Soviet actions prior to the India/Pakistan crisis, and we found their behavior on Vietnam also very hard to comprehend. I had talked to the Soviet Foreign Minister about Vietnam at the end of September. We had transmitted a specific proposal. We had received a reply from the Soviet Foreign Minister as well as from the Vietnamese that they were ready to talk. We accepted the Vietnamese date for the meeting and three days before, it was cancelled.³ Since then we had not heard from them. If a Communist offensive occurred, I emphasized that we would certainly take the strongest possible action, which in turn would have effects on our relationship. It was clear that the Soviet Union might think it could embarrass us in Peking by encouraging North Vietnamese attacks now, but it paid a heavy price in our goodwill. Certainly if the Vietnam issue were removed, all other areas in our relations would make quick progress.

Dobrynin replied that he wanted me to understand the following: First, the Soviet Union had recommended our plan to Hanoi early in October and had been under the impression that Hanoi would negotiate. Secondly, the Soviet Union had no interest in an offensive by Hanoi, because if the offensive took place now prior to the Peking summit it could be repeated prior to the Moscow summit. The last thing the Soviet Union wanted was a confrontation with the United States in the months before the Moscow summit. Thirdly, the Soviet Union believed that the war should come to an end now. But it was

³ On October 11, 1971, the U.S. Government proposed an eight-point peace plan. For text, see Department of State *Bulletin*, February 21, 1972, pp. 229–230. On November 17, 3 days prior to scheduled meeting with U.S. officials, the North Vietnamese notified U.S. representatives that Le Duc Tho was “ill” and would not be able to attend the meeting. The North Vietnamese did not agree to the rescheduling of an alternate date. See Kissinger, *White House Years*, p. 1040.

not prepared to bring pressure to this end. I said that, in that case the objective tendency of Soviet policy was to exacerbate the tensions and to encourage Hanoi. I pointed out that the spate of articles in the Soviet press that accompanied Haig's visit to Peking reinforced this and were taken very ill in Washington.

Dobrynin replied that if we read those articles carefully we would see that they were not directed against the United States but against China. They were placed into the Soviet newspapers on the pages reserved for Chinese affairs, and they represented an opportunity for the Soviet Union to hit back at China with some of the charges China had made against them.

With respect to the North Vietnamese behavior, Dobrynin continued, it was the impression in Moscow that what had really aborted the negotiations in the fall was the Chinese intervention. It was Moscow's impression that after my visit to Peking⁴ the Chinese raised the new U.S. proposal with the North Vietnamese and the North Vietnamese took violent exception to this. They were furious with the Chinese in any event because they believed that the Chinese had aborted their seven-point plan⁵ and that the campaign they had planned in support of their plan was destroyed by my visit to Peking, about which Hanoi had not been informed ahead of time and of which Hanoi was informed only 36 hours prior to the announcement.

When the Chinese raised our peace plan with them, Hanoi decided that it was essential that if peace is negotiated it appear as the result of Hanoi's actions and not of Great Power pressure. They scheduled a visit to Peking and did not receive full assurances. It was Moscow's impression, however, that recently they had received fuller assurances.

I told Dobrynin that, whatever the convoluted maneuvers of inter-Communist politics, the fact of the matter was that if the Soviet Union had also joined the appeal there would have been peace, so that the objective tendency of Soviet policy was to encourage a continuation of the war even if they never used words to that effect. I also stressed that if the Soviet Union were really as concerned about U.S.-Soviet rapprochement as it professed to be, it should consider that an end of the Vietnam war would remove one of the principal obstacles to it. Dobrynin said he thought this was realized in Moscow, but it was a very difficult situation.

⁴ Documentation on Kissinger's secret trip to China in July 1971 is in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume XVII, China, 1969–1972.

⁵ The text of the PRG seven-point peace plan of July 1, 1971 is in *American Foreign Relations, 1971: A Documentary Record*, pp. 295–298.

India/Pakistan

We turned to the India/Pakistan crisis. I told Dobrynin that we thought that Soviet actions either by design or miscalculation had made the outbreak of the war more probable and the settlement of the conflict once it started more difficult. While I regretted what I had said on Air Force One,⁶ since a public statement was not called for at that point, it did accurately reflect the state of mind of the President and of the Administration, and he should have no illusions about the real blow to U.S.-Soviet relations that the India/Pakistan war had represented.

Dobrynin replied that, whether I believed it or not, the Soviet Union had exerted maximum counsels of restraint prior to the outbreak of the war. If I could see all Soviet documents, I would find that the Soviet Union had consistently opposed Indian military action. I interjected that it didn't matter what the Soviet Union said; the decisive aspect was what the Soviet Union did. Dobrynin said that once the war started, however, the Soviet Union was convinced that it would only end with the freedom of Bangla Desh and therefore they were puzzled as to the purpose of our actions. Were we trying to embarrass them with the Indians? Were we conducting a concerted policy with the Chinese? He could assure me that in none of the deliberations in Moscow did Soviet policy in the sub-continent have an anti-U.S. character. If any other country was being considered, it was China, not the U.S. But when we went back to the Security Council, forcing a Soviet veto, it looked like a provocative action in the Soviet Union.

I said to Dobrynin our problem was the following: We had told Vorontsov and his Agriculture Minister that an attack on West Pakistan would create the gravest problems;⁷ we received an answer 48 hours later that an attack on West Pakistan was not being planned.⁸ But (a) there was no assurance in it as to whether Kashmir, where two-thirds of the Pakistan forces were, was included in West Pakistan, an ominous signal because the Indians had deliberately excluded it; and (b) there was an ambiguity about the word "planned" because the Indians might have claimed they were moving in self-defense. We therefore had to lay the legal basis for taking a strong stand on behalf of West Pakistan.

⁶ Reference is to off-the-record remarks made to reporters traveling on the Presidential airplane Air Force One on December 15, 1971. Kissinger told reporters that Nixon intended for the Soviet Union to restrain India during the war with Pakistan, and if it did not do so the President would reassess the relationship with the Soviet Union, including the summit. (*The New York Times*, December 15, 1971)

⁷ See Document 23.

⁸ See footnote 4, Document 22.

Dobrynin pointed out, as a sidelight, that the Soviet Minister of Agriculture was in a very difficult position when he was in the President's office. In the Soviet system, the Minister of Agriculture is not permitted to express any opinion on foreign policy, either towards foreigners or within the Soviet system. So the poor Minister did not reply to any of the President's comments. The result was that he was criticized in Moscow for having let the President's exposition go unchallenged. He didn't think the Minister would ever request another appointment at the White House.

As to the substance of the matter, Dobrynin said that whether I believed it or not, the Soviet reply was drafted in response to our note. We had said we were concerned with an attack on West Pakistan, so the Soviet Union replied that an attack on West Pakistan was not contemplated; they were not aware of the fine points of the distinction between West Pakistan and Kashmir. Also the Soviet Union was in the dilemma that to agree to a ceasefire before Dacca had fallen would have mortgaged their relationships with India, and therefore he freely admitted that the Soviet Union was trying to delay until Dacca had fallen. But there was never any question in Moscow that it would then use maximum pressure to get the war ended and he could assure me that that pressure had been used.

He also wanted to say that until I made my comment on Air Force One about possibly cancelling the summit, the Soviet leadership had not realized completely how much we thought Soviet-U.S. relations were involved. I told him that I had not actually intended to make a formal statement to that effect, and explained some of the circumstances. At the same time, it accurately reflected our thinking and our concern. Dobrynin said he wanted to assure me that the Soviet Union was in a way trapped by events, and that it did not want a crisis in South Asia.

Dobrynin then asked if we would work with the Chinese now to make Bangla Desh a base for operations against West Bengal. I said we were in much less frequent contact with the Chinese than with the Soviet Union, and that in any event this was not our policy. Dobrynin said we had to understand that on the subject of China people in Moscow were extremely emotional. My visit to China and the President's acceptance of the invitation had had a tremendous impact among the Soviet leadership. They made special studies and concluded that there wasn't really a great deal that we could do of a concrete nature with the Chinese. At the same time, anytime we made a move that looked pro-Chinese, the anti-U.S. people in the Politburo got the upper hand again. So during the Indian crisis the only explanation believed in Moscow was that we were pursuing a concerted policy with the Chinese. I responded that the Soviets had an unusual ability to

bring about a concerted policy between us and the Chinese. As Dobrynin well knew, the Moscow summit would have preceded the Peking summit if the Soviet Government had been more generous in its responses last summer. We had had no intention when I left for Peking to agree to an earlier summit, but then when we received the Soviet reply the President decided to go all-out in that direction. The danger now was that the more intransigent the Soviet Union was, the more we would respond by compensating moves towards Communist China; it was therefore important that we get our relationships on a sensible basis.

Dobrynin said that this was exactly his intention.⁹

The Moscow Summit

Dobrynin then added that he was instructed by his Government to express its views on U.S.-Soviet relations. He produced a letter from Brezhnev in which he said there were three principal questions: (1) Did the United States want a summit; (2) were we prepared to make major progress at the summit; and (3) were we prepared to discuss a precise agenda and agree ahead of the summit about its probable outcome? He was also authorized to discuss with me all the technical questions.

I answered Dobrynin as follows: (1) We remain interested in the summit and look forward to it; (2) the reason we look forward to the summit is because we expect it to have constructive results, and we are therefore prepared, with respect to question three, to engage in detailed discussions of the agenda as well as the substance.

Dobrynin asked how long we expected to stay in the Soviet Union. I said we were prepared to stay as long as we did in the People's Republic, that is, seven days. He said, "Let's say five–seven days." He asked how many places we wanted to visit. I said tentatively maybe three. He said, "Let's say Moscow, Leningrad and the third place to be mutually agreed upon." He asked what form of final statement we wanted: a communiqué, a joint draft statement, or what. I told him we would have specific proposals in a couple of weeks.

We then turned to substantive issues.

SALT

The first subject was SALT. Dobrynin asked whether we were prepared to accept their proposal on ABM. I said that as far as we could

⁹ The issue of Soviet involvement in South Asia was discussed during the Senior Review Group meeting of January 19. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-113, SRG Minutes, Originals, 1972)

see it would wind up as a practical matter as three-to-one in their favor. Dobrynin said no, this was a question of justice. I said, "Well, how would you feel if we asked for an increase in the number of missiles on the offensive side, since you seem to be arguing that we should stay where we are offensively but reduce our advantage defensively?" Dobrynin said that he thought they would look at it favorably if we wanted to increase the number of offensive weapons.

He then turned to the limitations on submarines, asking what exactly we had in mind with this new program. If the program were adopted, would this be in addition to the 41 boats I had indicated that we would be prepared to accept as an overall ceiling? I said no, my understanding was that if we accepted the 41 boats as an overall ceiling we would have to retire an old boat for every new boat that we put into the inventory. Dobrynin then said his impression was that we were no longer talking about boats but about the total number of missiles on submarines. He asked why we had made that change. I said that it was to accommodate Soviet concerns that more missiles could be put on submarines and that we might count old Soviet submarines as part of the 41. Dobrynin said that he thought that they would probably prefer a limitation on boats.

He added that as far as he could see there were three possibilities intellectually: (1) no limitation on submarines; (2) a limitation on the total number of submarines; and (3) a limitation on the total number of missiles, with freedom to mix between land-based and sea-based. I noted that intellectually there was a fourth possibility, namely separate ceilings for sea-based and land-based missiles. He said he thought the fourth possibility was a subdivision of the third. He also said that he thought that if the Soviet Union would agree to include SLBM's the total-ceiling approach would probably be the best; at any rate he wanted me to know that he was prepared to discuss the subject. Dobrynin then wanted to know what impact the SALT agreement might have on the rate of our SLBM program. I said under those conditions we might consider moving it at a more measured pace. He asked why, as long as we had a new SLBM program, did we need a SALT agreement on it at all? He could see why we couldn't agree to exclude SLBM's before, because Congress might have objected to our not having an SLBM program while the Soviet Union continued. Under present circumstances, it might be best to exclude them altogether and keep the seas unconstrained. I said that at the moment this would be unacceptable to us. Dobrynin asked whether it would still remain unacceptable in early May if we still hadn't broken the deadlock. I said I had no idea but at this moment it was unacceptable.

Dobrynin noted that the Soviet leadership was very eager to sign a SALT agreement at the summit. He said he thought that we should

be eager also, because otherwise there would be too many disappointed hopes in both countries. I said we would do our best.¹⁰

Middle East

We then turned to the Middle East. Dobrynin said Moscow understood that I had not committed us to enter negotiations. Could I give them some answer on the subject now? I said we had felt that we could not proceed on this subject without talking with the Israelis at least in general terms, because their intelligence was so good and the danger of leakage in the Middle East was too great to proceed according to the Soviet suggestion. The President had therefore had a conversation with Golda Meir, and so had I.¹¹ On the basis of these conversations the President had concluded that talks could proceed.

Dobrynin asked whether I thought there was a possibility of concluding an interim agreement at the summit. I said I thought there was a good possibility if both sides were reasonable, and that we had obtained some concrete Israeli proposals along that line. It was essential, however, that they take no military action before, since we could not act under duress. Dobrynin said he agreed, and that they were using their influence in this direction.

We then turned to the overall settlement. I said that we needed longer discussion on the subject but I could say in a preliminary way that the Israelis were prepared to let us proceed with discussions, on the understanding that the plan would not be identical with the Rogers plan.¹² In what way should it differ, Dobrynin asked. I said there would probably have to be some Israeli presence beyond the dividing lines, though not in the form of sovereign presence. It would be a test of our ingenuity whether we could come up with some appropriate formula. Dobrynin said it would be very tough but he would ask for instructions in Moscow. I added that it was important to have a maximum ceasefire after an interim agreement. Dobrynin said it was understood

¹⁰ Kissinger transmitted Dobrynin's comments on offensive weapons to the head of the SALT delegation in backchannel message 28110 to Smith, January 28. (Ibid., Box 427, Backchannel Files, Backchannel Messages, 1972, SALT) Smith replied with his personal assessment of Dobrynin's "intellectual possibilities" in backchannel message Vienna 144 to Kissinger, January 31. (Ibid., Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 2])

¹¹ See footnote 2, Document 16. Atherton met with Vorontsov on January 7 to discuss the Middle East. (Memorandum of conversation, January 7; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR)

¹² The Rogers plan was a peace proposal put forth by the Secretary of State in a December 9, 1969, speech that included most notably a call for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Egyptian territories in return for peace between Egypt and Israel. For text, see Department of State *Bulletin*, January 5, 1970, pp. 7–11.

in Moscow that we could not raise the issue of a final settlement with the Israelis until well into 1973.¹³

We agreed that we would have a meeting devoted to the Middle East soon.

Trade

We next turned to the issue of bilateral relations. Dobrynin said that their trade delegation was extremely eager, and he had the impression that our Commerce Department was putting them under even greater pressure. In fact, the Soviet trade people were so eager that they had been trying to get him back to the U.S. earlier than he planned so that they could make a preliminary agreement. He wanted us to know that the Kremlin was eager for these negotiations to proceed, but the final agreement should be signed in Moscow at the summit. Did I see any major obstacles? I replied that we were conducting a review now but we were approaching it in a positive manner. I pointed out, however, that it was really hard to conceive how the U.S. could even consider major credits to a country whose military equipment was shooting at Americans.¹⁴

¹³ In a January 21 memorandum to Kissinger discussing key points for a Middle East peace settlement, Haig noted: "The interim phase would be dragged out at least until the Summit, to insure a ceasefire through the Summit." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 2 [Pt. 2])

¹⁴ During January Stans continued to meet with a Soviet trade delegation. According to a transcript of a January 10 telephone conversation with Kissinger, Stans reported that "the head of the delegation says they have authority to negotiate with us for 5 years of feed grains—\$5 billion." He also noted that the Soviets were interested in discussing Lend-Lease debt repayment and an Export-Import Bank loan. Kissinger offered the following advice to Stans: "No doubt we want to move in both those directions and question whether we will use them to screw us or they will use us. Helpful signs. They are not looking for major crisis. Don't get Agriculture in yet. Keep it between you and me." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) On January 14 Stans reported on his meeting with the Soviet delegation 2 days earlier. He noted that the Soviets had notified him of their readiness to begin discussions on both agricultural issues and on the lend-lease debt renegotiations. Kissinger stated his preference for holding off on the commencement of such talks until around February 10, which would afford him the opportunity to discuss these issues with Dobrynin. Kissinger added: "It's practically settled. We want it underway before Peking. I want to settle these other things. It will be done. You did exactly what we wanted." (Ibid.) On February 11 Nixon and Kissinger discussed the issue further in a telephone conversation. (Ibid.) In NSDM 151, February 14, the President directed that the Department of State take the lead in developing recommendations for renewed lend-lease discussions with the Soviets and that the Department of Agriculture devise policy recommendations on grain sales to the Soviet Union. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-230, NSDM Files, NSDM 151)

European Security Conference

We then discussed the European Security Conference. Dobrynin asked whom on our side he should be in touch with; I had told Gromyko that I was in charge but Rogers had told him the opposite. I told him I would have to check with the President, but in any event issues of principle should be checked with me. He said that they were now prepared not to force the pace of the European Security Conference, but they hoped that some direction could be indicated at the summit.

Other Matters

Dobrynin also said that they were prepared to sign agreements on outer space and cooperation on health at the summit, and that we should get preliminary talks underway.

Finally, Dobrynin handed me a letter from Brezhnev for the President [Tab B],¹⁵ pointing out that I had only spoken of an improvement in relations while Brezhnev had, in his concluding paragraph, talked of a substantial improvement in relations. I said we would accept that formulation.

Dobrynin said if we were going to work out all these issues before the summit it was essential that we meet regularly, at least once a week, and he hoped that we would not wait until after the Peking trip. I told him I would be prepared to meet with him on a weekly basis, starting immediately.

The meeting then concluded.

Tab B**Letter From Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev to President Nixon¹⁶**

Moscow, January 17, 1972.

Dear Mr. President,

I would like to outline to you some of my considerations in continuation of the exchange of opinion which has begun between us and which I consider very useful.

¹⁵ Brackets in the source text.

¹⁶ No classification marking. The letter is marked "unofficial translation" and a notation indicates the President saw it.

We share the opinion expressed in your letter of October 19, 1971,¹⁷ that the prospective Moscow meeting in May 1972 can mark a new departure in Soviet-U.S. relations. For it to become the one, it is necessary—and we are in accord with you on this—to reach a widest possible mutual understanding before the meeting itself, by way of preparing it.

It seems to us that the time is coming when it is necessary to get down to practical work on the questions which will be discussed at the meeting. Going over the details of the appropriate questions is, naturally, to be the job for our entrusted representatives. In this regard we, as well as you, attach special importance to the existing confidential channel.

At the same time, it seems, it would be right if we periodically compare our viewpoints on the key aspects of the most important issues in order to facilitate progress in the search for their constructive solutions.

In this letter I do not intend to dwell in detail on all the problems under discussion between our sides. I would like to dwell briefly only on certain aspects taking into account the development of events which have taken place of late.

I share your view that the signing on September 3, 1971, of the Four-Power agreement to West Berlin was a concrete accomplishment on the road to a stable peace and demonstrated the effectiveness of co-operative efforts by our two countries. It also gives us gratification that since then agreements have been reached between the GDR and the FRG, as well as between the GDR and West Berlin in connection with the above Four-Power agreement and that the process has been started to ratify the treaties between the FRG and the Soviet Union and between the FRG and Poland.

We consider it important, proceeding from the favorable situation, to undertake further concrete steps, that would consolidate the détente and safeguard security in Europe, and we count on a constructive approach to those questions on the part of the U.S. A confidential exchange of views, suggested by you, regarding the Conference on European Security and cooperation would, I believe, be useful indeed.

The situation in the Middle East, Mr. President, causes serious concern. The tension there is not diminishing. Rather, to the contrary. Many elements in Israel's behaviour cause apprehension. But it should be clear that attempts to carry out its known designs toward the Arab territories would lead to far-reaching consequences.

¹⁷ Document 6.

In conversation with you in Washington our Minister for Foreign Affairs set forth in detail considerations concerning the questions of Middle East settlement. We are prepared, as before, to work in real earnest to find concrete solutions on the basis of the principles set forth in that conversation, and to bring what has been started to successful conclusion. And here it is desirable to act without delay.

On the question of Vietnam I would like—without repeating what we have said earlier—to express once again our confidence that a basis for peaceful settlement in that area does exist. However, the actions by U.S. armed forces, especially lately, raids against the DRV can only push events in the opposite direction. Yet, Mr. President, in all times, and more recent ones included, the peoples duly appreciated not those who started or expanded a war, but those who decisively put an end to it, guided by the highest interests of their people and of peace.

I already wrote to you about the seriousness of our intentions both with respect to the whole of the problem of strategic armaments limitation and to the realization of the agreement of May 20, 1971.¹⁸ Taking due account of your wishes we instructed the Soviet delegation at the Vienna negotiations to conduct a parallel discussion of the questions of an ABM agreement and of certain temporary measures in the field of offensive strategic weapons. You are aware, of course, of those proposals which the Soviet delegation put forward in Vienna. And, as we understand, those proposals are now being studied in Washington. On our part, we, too, continue to analyze the U.S. position, taking into account also those considerations that have been transmitted to us through the confidential channel. Given the mutual regard for the interests of both sides we shall be able, one can hope, to achieve progress at the negotiations.

Recently there has been a certain development of bilateral relations between our countries, including the area of trade and economic matters. We regard as useful the recent visit of Maurice Stans, U.S. Secretary of Commerce, to the Soviet Union. The exchange of opinion that took place here with him and the understanding reached regarding the continuation of the work, that has been initiated, toward removing the obstacles to a mutually advantageous development of trade and economic cooperation, will help, we hope, to prepare positive decisions on these questions for the May summit meeting.

In our correspondence there have already been mentioned potential possibilities for expanding Soviet-U.S. cooperation also in a number of areas of science and technology. Now it seems that in a practi-

¹⁸ For text of the agreement and its annexes and attachments, see Department of State *Bulletin*, September 27, 1971, pp. 318–325.

cal way, respective agencies should be charged with the task of preparing intergovernmental agreements on scientific and technological cooperation, including the questions of exploration of the outer space and the world ocean, protection of the environment, as well as in the field of public health—these questions to be dealt with separately from the general exchange agreement. The signing of the above new agreements could be timed with the meeting in May.

In conclusion I would like to emphasize the great significance that we attach to the forthcoming meeting with you as well as to the kind of situation it will be taking place in. We expect that it will open prospects for moving ahead in our relations and for dealing constructively with major international problems. This is all the more important since, as you rightly mentioned in your letter of October 19, all of mankind would benefit from the successes of the Moscow meeting.

Let me express the hope that the new year of 1972 will be a year of substantial improvement of Soviet-U.S. relations, a year of further strengthening the peace and international cooperation.

Sincerely,

L. Brezhnev¹⁹

¹⁹ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

40. Letter From President Nixon to Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev¹

Washington, January 25, 1972.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The speech I am making on Tuesday evening, January 25² reaffirms once again the United States desire to reach a negotiated settlement of the Indochina war.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 2]. No classification marking. Kissinger gave this letter to Dobrynin on January 28. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule) A similar message also was passed to the People's Republic of China on January 26.

² For text of Nixon's January 25 speech on peace in Vietnam, see *Public Papers: Nixon, 1972*, pp. 100–106.

We are offering a new plan for peace, the essence of which was transmitted to the North Vietnamese over three months ago.³ Hanoi has chosen to ignore this proposal, cancelling a private meeting with Mr. Kissinger at the last moment in mid-November. Since then we have had no reaction from the North Vietnamese except a step-up in their military actions throughout Indochina.

This plan reflects the conversation Foreign Minister Gromyko had with me and Mr. Kissinger last September. It is specifically designed to take account of the obstacles to a solution that still remained after considerable progress during the summer. It offers a political process which would give all forces in South Vietnam a fair chance for political power, as well as committing the United States to total withdrawal within a short period. Alternatively, as I make clear in my speech, we remain ready to settle military issues alone, as we proposed privately last May. In this case, we would withdraw all American and allied forces within six months in exchange for an Indochina ceasefire and release of all prisoners. The political question would be left for the Vietnamese to settle among themselves.

The United States has now taken every reasonable step to meet North Vietnamese concerns and respect the sacrifices and interests of all parties. These proposals go to the limits of United States generosity. They make it clear that there is no reason for the conflict to continue.

The North Vietnamese nevertheless seem intent to keep on trying to embarrass the United States by a major military offensive. The Soviet Union should understand that the United States would have no choice but to react strongly to actions by the North Vietnamese which are designed to humiliate us. Such developments would be to no one's benefit and would serve to complicate the international situation.

The United States believes that all concerned countries have an interest in helping end this war and that its proposals mean that the Soviet Union could promote this objective without in any way compromising its principles.

I am sending you this note in the spirit of candor and mutual understanding which have characterized our exchanges.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon

³ See footnote 3, Document 39.

41. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, January 28, 1972, 1 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy F. Dobrynin
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

The meeting lasted 2½ hours and took place in an extremely warm atmosphere.

Dobrynin began the conversation by talking about the Washington Press Club speech that I had given two days before. He said he thought it was extremely funny, and that he had forwarded my joke about Gromyko to Moscow.

Vietnam

We then turned to Vietnam. Dobrynin said that at first he had thought our action (the President's address of January 25)² precipitate, but if we were really convinced that there would be an offensive, he could see the sense in it. He wanted to assure me again that the Soviet Union had no interest in seeing the war continue; on the contrary, the Soviet Union had every incentive to see the war end, because methods that could be used prior to the Peking Summit might also be applied prior to the Moscow Summit.

I said there was another reason why the Soviet Union had an interest in seeing the war end. Many of the things we were talking about presupposed a President who had authority enough to implement them after his election, and it could not be in the Soviet interest to undermine Presidential authority. Finally, there would be the major problem that if an offensive took place we were determined to make a sharp response. We would simply not hold still for an American humiliation. Dobrynin said that this point had been made abundantly clear.

Dobrynin then asked whether I had any ideas for ending the war. Was the offer of a military arrangement still open? I said it was, as long

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt 2]. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. The meeting was held in the Map Room at the White House. Kissinger summarized the meeting in a February 8 memorandum to the President, to which he attached this memorandum of conversation. A notation on the summary memorandum indicates the President saw it. (Ibid., Kissinger Office Files, Box 67, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Sonnenfeldt Papers [2 of 2]) The lunch ran from 1:10 to 3:30 p.m. (Library of Congress, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule)

² See footnote 2, Document 40.

as it involved elements of a ceasefire. Dobrynin asked whether the ceasefire was an absolute requirement. I said a standstill of military operations was a requirement. The formality in which it was expressed could be perhaps the subject of negotiation. Dobrynin said that this was an interesting point. I stressed that I was thinking out loud and that it represented no commitment.

Summit

We then turned to the Summit. Dobrynin said that Moscow was eager to find out the form of the communiqué we had in mind. Did we want one joint statement?³ Or could we have a communiqué with a statement of principles attached? I said that in all honesty I couldn't really tell the difference. Dobrynin said that Moscow did not want to press us, but it would be helpful in their own thinking if they could learn our preferences. Brezhnev leaned towards a communiqué that expressed our formal agreements and a statement of principles, but for them to begin working on it there would have to be a governmental decision, and Brezhnev did not want to submit it to the government if it were going to be turned down. I told him that I would check and would let him know at the next meeting.

SALT

The next subject of conversation was SALT. We again went over much of the same ground as we had at the previous meeting—that is to say, the nature of defensive limitations and the nature of offensive limitations, and Dobrynin made again essentially the same points about the intellectual possibilities that existed with respect to offensive limitations.

Dobrynin asked whether there was any chance of our accepting the Soviet proposal on defensive limitations. I said that I saw no possibility of that in their present form. I raised the issue of hard-site defense. I said there were some people in our country who thought that if we could have a hard-site defense of one site, it would be better than a Safeguard defense of both sites, and in that case there might be a possibility of our looking at the proposal more seriously. Dobrynin did not quite understand what was meant by hard-site and I then explained it to him, which took some time. Dobrynin promised that he would check informally in Moscow, but that it would take two weeks to get an answer.

³ In a January 27 briefing memorandum to Kissinger prepared for this meeting, Sonnenfeldt suggested various forms for the joint statement to follow the Moscow summit meetings. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt 2])

We both agreed that we would come to an agreement in principle before the negotiators met again at the end of March, and that we would gear the conversations to an agreement at the Summit.

Middle East

We next spoke about the Middle East. Dobrynin said that he was horrified by what he read in the newspapers about Sisco's activities. His experience with Sisco had been that he had a compulsive tendency to talk and that one never really knew where one was going. There was also the danger that Sisco would complicate their problems with the Egyptians because the Soviets could not put forward a position that was softer than the one Sisco might put forward. Wasn't there some possibility that I could simply order Sisco to stop? I said, well, there was some advantage in having public attention focus on something other than a deadlock. Dobrynin said, in that case, how much could they explain to the Egyptians?

I said that was their problem; we were going to keep the Israelis informed about the main lines of our conversations, but we could be sure that the Israelis would not leak. I think we could deliver some sort of interim agreement by the time of the Summit. On the other hand, matters would get very sticky when we reached the overall settlement. My concern was that Sadat would start explaining to his people the reason for not pressing harder. Dobrynin said that Sadat was going to come to Moscow, and they would have a very difficult time explaining their position to him. Would I leave it in Gromyko's hands how much he would be told? I said, yes, as long as it was understood that a significant leak would blow up the whole conversation.

Dobrynin urged again that we exercise the greatest restraint in the Sisco conversations, and he wondered whether it mightn't be better to get Jarring started again, rather than the Sisco talks, because at least Jarring could be controlled by both sides and he was guaranteed to produce a stalemate. I said I doubted it.

Trade

We then turned to trade issues. Dobrynin again indicated the Soviet interest in having a massive increase in trade, and he urged that we do not link it too formally. He said Stans was very heavy-handed, and every time he was stuck he would blame the White House for failure to get authority to proceed. He, Dobrynin, understood very well that this was a form of Stans' bringing pressure on the White House, but his colleagues thought it was a form of linkage and it got the backs up of the suspicious people in the Politburo. I said, "You understand that we consider trade related to political progress and, conversely, that if your political behavior is unacceptable, something will happen to trade. But we see no need to make that point in every negotiation, and

I will make sure that it does not come to you in this way anymore. In any event, the synchronization between the White House and Commerce will greatly improve after Peterson moves in. You will hear much more similar views.”

Dobrynin suggested that we meet weekly while we were preparing for the Summit, and we made another lunch date for the following Friday (February 4).⁴

Dobrynin then urged again that we be very careful about too ostentatious an embrace of the Chinese because reactions in the Soviet Union on that subject were very volatile. I said that our relations vis-à-vis the Chinese were being distorted by the Vietnamese war, and that if that were ended, everything would fall in its proper perspective.

We parted cordially.

⁴ See Document 45.

42. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between White House Chief of Staff (Haldeman) and the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, February 1, 1972, 7:25 p.m.

K: Sorry to bother you at home. I found out that Rogers is seeing Dobrynin.² I know this sounds again like we are starting a constant fight but this is going to blow up the summit.

H: What should we do?

K: Somebody has to be in charge. To let this snake maneuver between the two of us.

H: What do we do?

K: No discussions until after the summit. First of all, it is an insolent note. It is useless. To say that he will cover the subjects covered at other levels of Government, that’s me.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² See Document 45.

H: Yeah.

K: I don't give a damn about that. What I give a damn about—I told Haig the minute he gets our memcon,³ he will get a meeting. I think I told you too.

H: Yeah.

K: The trouble is this will get—the trouble is it gives Dobrynin the chance to maneuver between us. . . . and no telling what Rogers will give on the Middle East. Then Dobrynin can take whatever is the softer version and whipsaw us with it.

H: When is he seeing him?

K: Tomorrow.

H: You don't know when?

K: No.

H: I can't do anything now because he and the President are both at a dinner.

K: It won't be early. I made my biggest mistake—I sent him a Brezhnev letter deleting the references to me. Now I have got to call Dobrynin and tell him what he knows and doesn't know.

H: I will see if we can turn it off in the morning.

K: And there is a chance of another thing about these airplanes. He is all for surfacing the May 31 proposal.⁴ No one has asked for it. It will only get us in trouble.

H: So what has happened?

K: Only surfaces those proposals the North Vietnamese had . . . him and Ziegler; him and Haig; him and McCloskey; McCloskey and Haig. You ask Ziegler if that wasn't a totally artificial crisis.

H: You mean surfacing?

K: That's right. No one has asked for it. We put a lot of things in from which we could depart and that's why he wants to surface it.

H: That's turned off now.

K: Yeah, but if he has this meeting you can't tell what he will do. What worries me is the Russian summit. Everything we give him he turns into a goddamn fight. If the Russian Summit goes the way Dobrynin and I have planned it, it will be such a smashing success it can't fail.

H: Let's see if we can turn him off in the morning.

³ Document 41.

⁴ Reference is to the May 31, 1971, U.S. offer, as made public in Nixon's January 25 speech, to set a deadline for mutual withdrawal that was rejected by the North Vietnamese; see footnote 2, Document 40.

43. Editorial Note

In an assessment of a February 3, 1972, meeting between Soviet General-Secretary Leonid Brezhnev and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat transmitted to President Richard Nixon in an April 8 memorandum, Assistant to the President Henry Kissinger concluded: "In sum, the record of the meetings in Moscow indicate that the Soviet-Egyptian relationship is considerably more reserved than it was before Nasser's death. Sadat is trying to manipulate the relationship primarily to strengthen his domestic political situation. He does not seem genuinely interested at this time in war with Israel. The Soviets, for their part, are still holding Sadat at arms' length. They are playing for time until they see how our private negotiations develop. The Soviets are clearly keeping their options open. The Soviets are willing to provide new arms to the Egyptians but they are concerned about the Egyptian request for an industrial base which would enable them to produce their own weapons. Such a development obviously would make Egypt less dependent upon the U.S.S.R. for weapon supply." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 638, Country Files, Arab Republic of Egypt (UAR) 1972, Vol. VIII) Kissinger attached an undated synopsis of this discussion. In a June 30 memorandum to Nixon, Kissinger summarized further meetings between Brezhnev and Sadat during the period April 27–29: "The overall theme of the late April talks reflect Sadat's fears that the Soviets would sell him out at the summit. He was also insistent that the Middle East situation called for more explicit Soviet diplomatic support of the Egyptian position and for delivery of new types of arms to give Egypt a convincing offensive capability, especially in the air. The protocols do not suggest that Sadat received much real satisfaction." (Ibid., Kissinger Office Files, Box 134, Country Files, Middle East, Rabin–1972–Vol. III)

44. Memorandum From President Nixon to Secretary of State Rogers¹

Washington, February 3, 1972.

With regard to your memorandum of February 1,² I would like for you to have the following guidelines in mind in your conversations with Dobrynin.

He obviously will be trying to find out what we are prepared to discuss or to concede at the Soviet summit and we, on our part, should therefore try to find out as much as we can as to what the Soviet leaders may be thinking with regard to the summit. As much as possible, therefore, I would like for you to get from him his evaluation of the recent conversations he has had with Brezhnev and Kosygin and other Soviet leaders on the summit and to avoid as much as possible giving him anything more than generalities with regard to our attitude toward the summit.

With regard to the summit agenda, I would suggest that you say that we both should be thinking about the agenda but that it will depend in large part on events that may occur between now and the time of our meeting in May and that, consequently, definitive discussions on agenda should not take place until around the first of April. This is, of course, true with regard to such subjects as the Middle East, SALT, and Vietnam, all of which are under active discussion in other channels at this time and which we will be able to appraise when we get closer to the date of the summit.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, President's Personal Files, Box 3, Memoranda from the President, 1969–1974, Memorandum to Secretary of State, 2/3/72. Top Secret; Sensitive. Other drafts of this memorandum are *ibid.*, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 2] An alternate memorandum from the President, drafted by Kissinger and instructing Rogers to limit his discussion on several issues, was not used. (*Ibid.*)

² In accordance with the January 19 Presidential directive (see Document 36), Rogers had notified Nixon of this upcoming meeting with Dobrynin in a February 1 memorandum: "I plan to see Ambassador Dobrynin later this week to get a report from him on his recent conversations in Moscow. I will focus on the matters which are presently being discussed with the Soviet Union at various levels of our two governments. This will permit me to make an assessment on what we need to do or decide upon now in order to have these matters come to fruition when you are in the Soviet Union." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9, [Pt. 2]) In a February 1 memorandum to Haldeman, Kissinger noted that on four recent occasions the NSC Staff had transmitted to the Department of State documents relating to ongoing U.S.–USSR negotiations while "in return we have received nothing." He added: "Since the President's directive we are worse off than ever before." (*Ibid.*, Kissinger Office Files, Box 148, State/White House Relationship, Vol. V, February 1, 1971–March 1972)

On European Security, as you know, my views are to move as slowly and cautiously as feasible. In fact, since meeting with Gromyko, I have told Luns, Heath, Brandt and Pompidou in discussing this subject that there can be no conference this year and that while we do not reject the idea we cannot agree to it even in principle until we have had an opportunity to evaluate with our allies and later with the Soviet what the substance of such a conference would be. In other words, discussion of the European Security Conference—but without commitment should be our line at this point.

With regard to SALT, the guidelines developed by the verification panel would seem to provide the best line for all of us to follow.

With regard to trade, we, of course, should continue to indicate interest but again avoid commitments until we are further down the road on other subjects. While direct reference to linkage, of course, must be avoided for reasons we are both aware, it is my view that as far as our actions are concerned how forthcoming we will be on the trade issue, particularly where credits are concerned, will depend on how forthcoming the Soviet leaders are on political issues in which we are concerned. Incidentally, on this point, I do not share the view of Stans, Peterson, et al, that trade with the Soviets is a good thing for us in and of itself. Trade is far more important to the Soviet than it is to us. It is one of the few bargaining chips we have and while we must not say that we consider it to be a bargaining chip we must be sure that we don't give it away for nothing.

On the Middle East, because of the high sensitivity on this issue during 1972 in this country, I believe it is essential for us to assess the on-going discussions with the Government of Israel and the other governments concerned in the area before going forward with discussions with the Soviets on this subject. This does not mean that we may not want to discuss the subject with them at a later time. However, this is an excellent example of one of those subjects on which no determination should be made with regard to the agenda until we get much closer to the summit date due to the fact that there are on-going discussions at this time which might change the situation before we meet in May.

Because of the frankness of some of the views I have expressed in this memorandum, I would like for you to keep it in your own possession and not distribute it to others in the Department. It is for your guidance only. I am giving Henry a copy so that in any discussion he might have with Dobrynin he will follow the same guidelines.

RN³

³ Printed from a copy that indicates Nixon signed the original.

45. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, February 4, 1972.

PARTICIPANTS

The Secretary of State
Ambassador Dobrynin

The Secretary called in Ambassador Dobrynin February 4 for their first formal conversation since his return from vacation.² They had a cordial talk for an hour and a quarter. The focus was the President's forthcoming trip to the Soviet Union and what might be done by way of preparation between now and May. The Secretary said that on our side we saw 1972 as a year of opportunity for bettering U.S.-Soviet relations; Dobrynin said he had spent three days discussing the visit with Brezhnev and Kosygin and they looked forward to constructive talks that would lead to positive, concrete results.

To begin the conversation the Secretary ran down the list of possible items of discussion given in Brezhnev's letter to the President of January 17. The rest of the conversation was in this context and covered the following main points:

Berlin. The Secretary asked when the Soviets intended to sign the final protocol on Berlin and Dobrynin replied that this depended upon FRG ratification of the Soviet-FRG treaty. The Secretary asked whether the Soviets had thought about signing the protocol in connection with the President's trip to Moscow, perhaps in Berlin en route to or from Moscow. Dobrynin said he did not believe his government had thought about this possibility—which was complicated of course by the involvement of the other countries—but he would inquire.

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR. Secret; Nodis. Transmitted to the President under cover of an attached February 7 memorandum from Rogers. The Department transmitted summaries of the conversation in telegrams 21094 and 21101 to Moscow, both February 5. (Ibid.)

² On January 31 Dobrynin told Deputy Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Richard Davies that "he had spent a longer time than originally planned in Moscow in order to have extended discussions with 'our very top people' about the President's trip to the U.S.S.R. in May. He had stayed at a dacha near Moscow and these talks had taken place in 'a quiet, unhurried atmosphere,' so that the Ambassador could impart to the Soviet leadership all his thoughts on both the substance of our relations and on administrative arrangements for the President's trip and so that he could absorb the thinking of the leadership on both these aspects of this important subject. As a result, he said, he was fully aware of Moscow's views and was prepared to discuss them now. He concluded that if the Secretary were interested in exchanging views, he was prepared to do so." (Memorandum of conversation, January 31; *ibid.*)

CSCE. Dobrynin said that his government is eager to discuss convening a European Conference with us. The Secretary indicated that we may have something to say at a later date, but made no commitment to discuss the subject.

MBFR. The Secretary asked why the Soviets objected to our term “balanced” force reductions. Dobrynin asked for a definition of the word, and when the Secretary remarked that “balanced” meant essentially that reductions should not result in a net advantage to either side, Dobrynin said that this was close to the position taken by the recent Warsaw Pact statement.

The Secretary asked particularly about the Brosio mission.³ Dobrynin said several times that there had been no decision, either to receive or not to receive Brosio. When the Secretary pressed him about when he expected an answer, he said, “I do not expect an answer.”

During this discussion Dobrynin referred to the “bloc-to-bloc” implications of the Brosio mission. The Secretary pointed out that the nature of MBFR was such that the subject was inevitably of primary concern to the members of the two alliances. Dobrynin conceded that the major involvement in negotiations would be by the two alliances, but said that non-members—he named the Scandinavians, Spain and Yugoslavia—had a clear interest and we must avoid any impression of trying to decide the fate of others. In an allusion to France, Dobrynin also noted that not all NATO members agreed on the “bloc-to-bloc” approach.

Middle East. This subject came up in regard to the list given in Brezhnev’s letter,⁴ and Dobrynin asked about our current efforts to get close-proximity talks going between Israel and Egypt. The Secretary described in general terms how we thought the talks would operate, and in response to Dobrynin’s question, said that our current proposal envisaged the same role for the U.S. that we could have played earlier. We did not have concrete proposals to offer, but thought the parties themselves should come forward with proposals. If we saw possibilities of bridging the gap we might offer suggestions to facilitate agreement.

The Secretary told Dobrynin that a great deal depended on what the Soviets did with regard to Sadat and reminded Dobrynin of our long-standing interest in a limitation on arms supplies to the area. The Secretary also noted that Sadat seemed to have a need now to get talks

³ Exploratory talks on MBFR with the Soviet Union with Manlio Brosio, former Secretary-General of NATO, as the head of a delegation to Moscow, had been proposed at the NATO Foreign Ministers meeting on October 6, 1971, but had yet to be accepted by the Soviet Government. See *Keesing’s Contemporary Archives*, January 1–8, 1972, pp. 25015–25016.

⁴ Dated September 7; Scheduled for publication in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume XIII, Soviet Union, October 1970–October 1971.

started. Dobrynin denied any special insight into Sadat's views, maintaining that Sadat told the Soviets just about what he said publicly. He added that he was not authorized either to encourage or discourage the current U.S. effort, and he said the Soviets had not tried to block earlier U.S. efforts to move towards a peaceful settlement.

Dobrynin also asked about the Israeli attitude towards a renewal of the Jarring mission, reporting that Jarring himself was discouraged by the Israeli attitude. The Secretary said that we would favor a renewal of the Jarring mission but that the parties kept raising preconditions. He thought Egypt had been relatively forthcoming and hoped Israel would make a further effort.

Finally, Dobrynin asked about a possible resumption of the four-power talks in New York, and the Secretary said we doubted they would be helpful at this point.

U.S.-Soviet Trade. Dobrynin said that the Soviet leaders had been well pleased by the visits of Secretary Stans and Assistant Secretary Gibson⁵ but wondered if since then there had been a change in our policy. He asked if we were backing away from what had earlier appeared to be a businesslike approach to settling outstanding economic issues. The Secretary told him that our policy had not changed and there was no deliberate pulling back from earlier positions. The Secretary explained that our talks on trade matters up to now had been purely exploratory, and we had to consider many questions carefully before proceeding. He added that the overall state of U.S.-Soviet relations was a factor in determining how much movement in the trade area would be acceptable to public opinion and Congress.

When Dobrynin pressed for a commitment that what the Soviet negotiator Manzhulo was told in the recent talks at the Department of Commerce represented the official U.S. position, the Secretary stated that what was said stands but we want to make it clear that we consider these talks exploratory.

Bilateral Matters. In a general review of issues we hope can be settled before May, the Secretary said we hoped to have a new Exchanges Agreement and to reach agreement on maritime and related issues.⁶ He also cited an agreement on construction conditions for new Embassies and the completion of facilities for the Consulates General in Leningrad and San Francisco as matters which we would like to

⁵ See Document 14.

⁶ In NSDM 146, January 3, Nixon directed that the Under Secretaries Committee prepare instructions for maritime talks and include the stipulations that "named U.S. ports open for calls by Soviet vessels should be open on the basis of 96-hours advance notification" and that "the U.S. objective at the talks should be the development of ad-referendum understandings based on discussion of the issues contained in the proposed

conclude before May. Dobrynin mentioned the case pending in Federal Court in Alaska against the two Soviet fishing vessels charged with violation of the contiguous zone and expressed the hope that the case could be settled expeditiously and not delayed several months because of a crowded court calendar.

The Secretary and Dobrynin agreed that between now and May they would meet periodically to review progress in the various areas of bilateral matters, looking toward a culmination, where possible, during the President's trip to Moscow. The Secretary informed Dobrynin that Assistant Secretary Hillenbrand would be in charge of coordinating for the State Department the various discussions and negotiations now in train, and they should be in touch on a regular basis.

U.S. agenda." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files) Box H-229, NSDM Files, NSDM 146) In NSDM 150, February 1, Nixon "decided that the United States should continue to seek a U.S.-Soviet understanding on measures to avoid incidents at sea." (Ibid., Box H-230, NSDM Files, NSDM 150) In a February 14 memorandum to Kissinger, Sonnenfeldt expressed concern that a Soviet protest over homeporting plans in Greece "had an implied warning of Soviet responses in Cuba." (Ibid., NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 67, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Sonnenfeldt Papers [2 of 2]) In addition, NSSM 144, January 14, directed that Soviet naval deployments in the Caribbean be evaluated. (Ibid., NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files) Box H-189, NSSM Files, NSSM 144) This study was completed and submitted to Under Secretary Johnson in the form of a March 13 memorandum from Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs Ronald Spiers. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, DEF 6-2 USSR)

46. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, February 7, 1972, 1:07 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

Possible Brezhnev Visit to U.S.

Dobrynin, who was in a very affable mood, began the conversation by giving me his account of Yevtushenko's report of his meeting

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 2]. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. The meeting was held in the Map Room at the White House. Kissinger forwarded the President a summary of the meeting in an undated memorandum. (Ibid.)

with the President.² Yevtushenko had reported to him that the President wished to see an avant-garde theater, to have a meeting arranged with intellectuals and writers, and to have disarmament on the agenda of the Summit conference. The President had also said he would extend an invitation to Brezhnev to visit the United States. I told Dobrynin that he had to remember that Yevtushenko talked 90 per cent of the time. Everything he just told me referred to statements by Yevtushenko to which the President had listened but on which he had expressed no opinion.

Dobrynin said it would be a little difficult in Moscow to treat the matter of Brezhnev's invitation in this way. He knew for a fact that Brezhnev was rather interested in coming to the United States. I told Dobrynin that if our talks went this year as I expected them to go, an invitation would seem to me to flow normally from a successful Summit, and might be extended for anytime next Spring or early Summer. Dobrynin said he would report this to Moscow.

Moscow Summit

Dobrynin asked me how we felt about the final statement following the summit—whether it should be one statement, or whether it could be split into two parts, a communiqué and a statement of principles. I told him we would be prepared to look at a statement of principles. He said that this was of interest to them also.

German Treaties

Dobrynin then mentioned the Soviets' impression of what Barzel had been told in the United States.³ It was that the United States was technically neutral with respect to ratification of the treaties, but in fact leaned towards it. This was sufficient help and was within the spirit of our arrangement. I did not contradict the point, but simply said that we wanted a relaxation of tensions and that we were pursuing a positive course.

Trade

Dobrynin then asked what progress could be expected on trade and other matters. I said that this depended—that we were studying the trade issues in a positive way and were getting ready to proceed

² Nixon, with Kissinger, Haldeman, and Ziegler, met with Yevgeny Yevtushenko, a Soviet poet, from 2:25 to 4:10 p.m. on February 3. (Ibid., White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary) A tape recording of this meeting is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Conversation between Nixon and Yevtushenko, February 3, 1972, Oval Office, Conversation No. 665–7.

³ West German opposition leader Barzel visited Washington in late January; see *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*; vol. XL, Germany and Berlin, 1969–1972, Document 338.

with sending a delegation to Moscow in the second half of March. Dobrynin wondered whether this could be announced before our China visit. I said I would look into the matter. Dobrynin asked whether we were delaying because of the China trip. I said, no, because the Chinese would be just as angry after as before, and because we didn't believe in paying such a price.

Rogers–Dobrynin Talks

Dobrynin then gave me a rundown of his conversations with Rogers.⁴ Rogers had avoided SALT by saying he understood that this had already been discussed between Dobrynin and me, but Rogers had pressed very hard on Soviet help in the proximity talks. Dobrynin asked me whether I thought we could manage our talks in this circumstance. I said we would certainly try to.

Middle East

The conversation then turned to the Middle East. Dobrynin summed up his understanding, which was that we would try to have an interim settlement by the Summit which would be public, and a private understanding of a final settlement, which would be implemented in 1973. As for the interim settlement, Dobrynin said that the Soviet Union had never been very interested in it but would go along with it. Everything depended on the final settlement.

I replied, with respect to the interim settlement, that I would have some concrete proposals to make at the next meeting. However, it was important to keep in mind that the Israeli interest in an interim settlement would grow in proportion as the length of peace it would buy. If an interim settlement was just a short stage toward a final settlement, the Israelis would rather await a final settlement on the banks of the Suez Canal than at some distance back of it. Dobrynin asked me what I had in mind. I said my understanding was that there were Israeli elections in October 1973, and that Israel would therefore prefer to wait and move to the final settlement after the fall of 1973. Dobrynin said their expectation was that we would move towards a final settlement in the first six months of 1973. I said that we should leave this open for the time being.

Dobrynin then asked me whether I had any ideas on a final settlement. I said that it was clear to me that there were two requirements: (1) Israel was not prepared to accept the Rogers plan; and (2) Israel wanted some presence beyond its frontiers, however the issue of sovereignty was decided. Dobrynin asked me which Rogers plan I was

⁴ See Document 45.

talking about—the one of 1969 or the one before the UN last October? The one of 1969, I said, because the one at the UN simply stated some general principles. Dobrynin said that the key issue was the territorial issue, and on that one it was very difficult for Egypt to be flexible or for the Soviets to press the Egyptians. I said that we could not settle it now, but maybe we should put our ingenuity to finding some formula which would define the presence beyond the frontiers other than by sovereignty.

Dobrynin said that they were reluctant to make proposals but they would very carefully examine any proposals that we could make in that connection. Dobrynin reaffirmed their commitment to withdraw their forces and to accept limitations on arms aid under conditions of a settlement. He also promised me that he would give me an account of the Sadat meeting. We agreed to meet on the following Tuesday.⁵

Vietnam and Brezhnev Letter

As the meeting was breaking up, Dobrynin suddenly produced a letter from Brezhnev [Tab B]⁶ in answer to the letter communicating the President's speech [Tab C].⁷ Dobrynin said he wished to point out that the letter was deliberately phrased in a very conciliatory fashion.

For example, none of the arguments made against the President's peace plan were embraced by the Soviet Union; they were all ascribed to the Vietnamese. He said he wanted to reaffirm officially that the Soviet Union was willing to help us end the war, but the Vietnamese were telling them a number of things that seemed very difficult: (1) the Vietnamese claimed that we were determined to maintain a residual force there indefinitely; (2) the Vietnamese were very concerned that if they made an agreement with us this year, we would break it after the President's re-election; and (3) the Vietnamese simply did not understand our political proposal.

I replied that with respect to the first point, it would be easy to reassure the Vietnamese. With respect to the second point, they should ask themselves what the President might do if he was not constrained by an agreement, since it was not unnatural for him to take decisive and violent steps. Dobrynin said he liked the phraseology "not unnatural." With respect to the third point, I said it underlined the crucial importance of the restoration of private negotiations. I was prepared to resume them either in Paris or in Moscow. I did not think it was possible any longer to go to Paris privately, so I would go openly next time

⁵ February 15.

⁶ All brackets in the source text.

⁷ Document 40.

and simply not reveal the content of the negotiations. I also reiterated my offer to come to Moscow secretly. Dobrynin said he would communicate all this to Moscow and let me have their reaction.

I then asked Dobrynin whether there was any particular point in replying to Brezhnev's letter, since the exchange was becoming so general that it might depreciate the utility of the Brezhnev/President channel. Dobrynin said no. Dobrynin said it would be best if we drafted a very brief letter just confirming the continuation of the channel, what issues would be discussed in it, and that we would reserve the Brezhnev/Presidential channel for the most crucial issues and to stay periodically in touch.

The meeting then broke up.

Tab B

Letter From Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev to President Nixon⁸

Moscow, February 5, 1972.

Dear Mr. President,

I received your letter of January 25. I also went through the text of your speech of the same date, in which the U.S. proposals on Vietnam, earlier transmitted to the DRV Government in a confidential manner, were made public.

You are undoubtedly aware of the reaction of the Vietnamese side to those proposals. The Vietnamese side notes that the proposals leave unsolved, as before, the question of complete withdrawal without conditions of U.S. troops from Vietnam, since this question is tied together with a number of terms of political and military nature. It is also emphasized that the U.S. proposals avoid the question of establishing in South Vietnam a broad government of national accord which would organize free and democratic elections. The idea of holding elections which would in fact be prepared by the hands of the present Saigon administration and be held in the conditions when U.S. troops still remained in South Vietnam, is viewed by the Vietnamese, as you know, as incompatible with the genuinely expressed free will of the people.

I will tell you frankly, Mr. President: such reaction of the Vietnamese to the U.S. proposals is quite understandable to us. It is not

⁸ No classification marking. A handwritten notation on the letter reads: "Handed to HAK by D on 7 Feb 72." A notation on the letter indicates the President saw it.

difficult to understand also the attitude of the Vietnamese side to the very fact of the disclosure by the U.S. side of the contents of the confidential negotiations between the representatives of the White House and Hanoi. At your request we made known to the DRV Government the readiness you expressed to restore confidential contacts with it. However, in view of the violation by the United States of the previous understanding concerning the confidential nature of those contacts, the question cannot but arise with the Vietnamese—and not with them alone—as to the real intentions of the other side, the more so that simultaneously threats are repeated to undertake new military actions.

As for the Soviet Union, we continue to believe that the conflict in Vietnam can and must be solved by a peaceful way on the basis of respect for the lawful rights of its people. We are ready, as before, to facilitate overcoming the difficulties that arise on this way, to the extent in which necessary realism will be displayed by the American side.

Sincerely,

L. Brezhnev⁹

⁹ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

47. Editorial Note

On February 9, 1972, President Nixon issued his third annual report to Congress on foreign affairs entitled: "U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970s: The Emerging Structure of Peace." In an accompanying transmittal message, Nixon explained the function of the report: "As I prepare to set out on my summit trips to Peking and Moscow, it is especially timely for the American people and the Congress to have available a basis for understanding the Government's policies and broad purposes in foreign affairs." See *Public Papers: Nixon, 1972*, page 194. The report contained a review of the previous year's foreign policy and also a forecast for future decisions in regard to various global regions. The portion of the report on the Soviet Union was under a section entitled "Areas of Major Change." This section also included a review of policy towards China, Europe and the Atlantic Alliance, Japan, and International Economic Policy. In the subsection addressing the proposed summit meeting, the President stated:

"In Moscow, we will have three central objectives. We want to complete work on those issues which have been carried to the point of

final decision. We want to establish a political framework for dealing with the issues still in dispute. And we want to examine with the Soviet leaders the further development of the U.S.–Soviet relationship in the years ahead.

“The tasks ahead rise logically from the present state of relations:

“—An accord on an initial strategic arms limitations agreement, or on the issues to be addressed in the second stage of the SALT negotiations.

“—A discussion of the problem of the Middle East and the reasons for the failure to reach a peaceful settlement there.

“—A discussion of the problem of European security in all its aspects and the identification of mutually shared objectives which will provide a basis for future normalization of intercourse between Eastern and Western Europe. No agreements in this area, however, will be made without our allies.

“—An exploration of our policies in other areas of the world and the extent to which we share an interest in stability.

“—An examination of the possibility of additional bilateral cooperation. The steps taken so far have been significant, but are meager, indeed, in terms of the potential. There are a variety of fields in which U.S.–Soviet cooperation would benefit both. Our economic relations are perhaps the most obvious example. Bilateral cooperation will be facilitated if we can continue to make progress on the major international issues.

“We do not, of course, expect the Soviet Union to give up its pursuit of its own interests. We do not expect to give up pursuing our own. We do expect, and are prepared ourselves to demonstrate, self-restraint in the pursuit of those interests. We do expect a recognition of the fact that the general improvement in our relationship transcends in importance the kind of narrow advantages which can be sought only by imperiling the cooperation between our two countries.

“One series of conversations in Moscow cannot be expected to end two decades’ accumulation of problems. For a long period of time, competition is likely to be the hallmark of our relationship with the Soviet Union. We will be confronted by ambiguous and contradictory trends in Soviet policy. The continuing buildup of Soviet military power is one obvious source of deep concern. Soviet attitudes during the crisis in South Asia have dangerous implications for other regional conflicts, even though in the end the U.S.S.R. played a restraining role. Similarly, the U.S.S.R.’s position in the Middle East reflects a mixture of Soviet interest in expansionist policies and Soviet recognition of the dangers of confrontation.

“In the past year, however, we have also had evidence that there can be mutual accommodation of conflicting interests, and that competition need not be translated into hostility or crisis. We have evidence that on both sides there is an increasing willingness to break with the

traditional patterns of Soviet-American relations. A readiness to capitalize on this momentum is the real test of the summit.

"The U.S.S.R. has the choice: whether the current period of relaxation is to be merely another offensive tactic or truly an opportunity to develop an international system resting on the stability of relations between the superpowers. Its choice will be demonstrated in actions prior to and after our meetings.

"For our part, we are committed to a new relationship. I made this comment in my Inaugural Address, at the United Nations, and in my exchanges with the Soviet leaders. Our actions have demonstrated our seriousness. We have the opportunity to usher in a new era in international relations. If we can do so, the transformation of Soviet-American relations can become one of the most significant achievements of our time." (Ibid., pages 211–212) The full text of the report is *ibid.*, pages 194–346.

In a similar report from the Department of State entitled "United States Foreign Policy 1971: A Report of the Secretary of State," submitted to Congress on March 8, Secretary of State Rogers noted:

"The President's visit to Moscow will provide an opportunity to exchange views on world problems where greater understanding between us could contribute to peace. It should also greatly enlarge the prospects for bilateral progress. No visit in itself—not even a summit visit—will remove the very real differences separating us. The visit should, however, give impetus to the movement, already apparent, toward increased cooperation. Our objective is to see that it does."

The full text of the report is in Department of State *Bulletin*, March 27, 1972, pages 459–470.

The Soviet reaction to especially the President's Report was harsh. In a February 24 memorandum to Assistant to the President Henry Kissinger, Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council staff reviewed official Soviet criticism in the press and other media and noted that "the Soviets have not been reluctant to attack the Report." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 67, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Sonnenfeldt Papers [2 of 2]) Peter Rodman of the National Security Council staff submitted a February 29 memorandum to Kissinger that also analyzed the Soviet reaction. In particular, he offered arguments Kissinger could take to assuage Soviet apprehension:

"—As your friend [Dobrynin] himself noted on February 15, the parts of the Report that discuss the U.S.-Soviet relationship as a whole (i.e., Soviet and Watershed chapters) deal with it in a very balanced fashion. These sections make clear the positive thrust that the President has all along been aiming for.

"—At the same time, the individual chapters (e.g., Mideast, South Asia, Strategic Forces) simply reflect the fact that the two global

powers impinge on each other in many ways and many places. You referred to this in your briefing accompanying the Report. The Report is thus a reflection of reality.

“—Candor and realism have all along been characteristic of this Administration. They are the only basis on which a durable positive U.S.-Soviet relationship can be constructed. This is our intent.” (Ibid.)

48. Minutes of Senior Review Group Meeting¹

Washington, February 11, 1972, 3:32–4:03 p.m.

SUBJECT

Review of U.S.-Soviet Negotiations

PARTICIPANTS

Chairman—Henry A. Kissinger

State:

Mr. John N. Irwin, II

Mr. Martin Hillenbrand

Mr. Joseph Neubert

DOD:

Mr. G. Warren Nutter

Mr. Lawrence Eagleburger

JCS:

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

Rear Adm. James H. Doyle

CIA:

Mr. David Blee

CIEP:

Mr. Deane Hinton

OST:

Dr. Edward David

NASA:

Dr. George Low

CEQ:

Mr. Russell E. Train

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-113, SRG Minutes, Originals. Secret. These notes were attached to and transmitted under cover of a February 15 memorandum from Davis to Kissinger. The meeting was held in the White House Situation Room.

Commerce:

Mr. Harold Scott

Treasury:

Dr. Charles Walker

Mr. John McGinnis

NSC:

Mr. Helmut Sonnenfeldt

Mr. Richard Kennedy

Mr. William Hyland

Mr. Dennis Clift

Mr. Mark Wandler

It was agreed that:

—The three issues discussed at the meetings—a joint space docking mission; environmental cooperation; and a joint commission on scientific and technical cooperation—will be put to the President for decision.

—All agencies should submit to the IG/EUR a list of bilateral issues which might be brought to a point before May and a list of agreements which might be ready for the President to sign at the Moscow Summit.

Dr. Kissinger: I thought we should have a brief meeting to go over the response to NSSM 143: the Review of the U.S.-Soviet negotiations.² As I see it, some of the more important bilateral issues are already the subject of separate White House instructions and guidance. U.S.-Soviet Trading Relationships, for example, are covered by NSSM 145.³ We have also provided guidance on U.S.-USSR Cooperation in Health and Medical Affairs. Isn't that agreement going to be announced today?

Mr. Hillenbrand: Yes. Secretary Richardson did it this morning.

Dr. Kissinger: Good. (to Mr. Hillenbrand) We will also send you some guidance shortly on the Maritime Talks. I want to concentrate here on three things: (1) the status of the proposed Joint Space Docking Mission; (2) bilateral Environmental Cooperation; and (3) the proposed U.S.-Soviet Commission on Scientific and Technical Cooperation. With regard to the whole menu of negotiations, we have two basic

² In NSSM 143, December 15, 1971, Nixon "directed that all bilateral issues that may be subject to discussions or negotiations with the U.S.S.R. between now and the summit meeting be reviewed by the Senior Review Group." (Ibid., Box H-188, NSSM Files, NSSM 143) The response is printed as Document 34.

³ In NSSM 145, January 17, Nixon noted the various proposals for the U.S.-Soviet trading relationship and directed that these proposals should be reviewed and considered. (Ibid., Box H-189, NSSM Files, NSSM 145) In NSDM 151, February 14, the President directed that the Department of State take the lead in developing a position on lend-lease negotiations and that the Department of Agriculture take the lead in developing scenarios relating to grain sales to the Soviet Union. (Ibid., Box H-230, NSSM Files, NSDM 151)

decisions to make. The first is which negotiations do we want to sign or conclude in Moscow, and the second is which negotiations do we want to give an impetus to in Moscow—so that there will be substantial post-Summit negotiating activity. Let's have a brief word now about the docking mission.

Dr. Low: The working level negotiations have been going well so far. We agreed with the Soviets at a meeting in Moscow late last year that such a mission would be technically feasible. The mission, which would take place in 1975, would involve the rendezvous and docking of a leftover Apollo craft and a Salyut-type space station.

In our view, there is no reason why we can't proceed with this mission. But it will be expensive. We estimate it will cost about \$275 million over and above what we are planning to do.

Dr. Kissinger: Will the \$275 million be the joint cost or just our cost?

Dr. Low: It will be our cost, and we are not sure we can get Congressional support for this expenditure. To sum up, then, the project is technically feasible, and there is support for it on both sides. There are, however, questions of cost and Congressional support, although I must add we have not yet tested the idea out in Congress.

Dr. Kissinger: Why is the cost so high? Since this is a joint project, I would think the cost should be lower.

Dr. Low: The cost is very high because this is a mission that would not be flown in the normal course of events. The Apollo program is ending, and there are no manned flights scheduled between the Skylab project of 1973 and the first Space Shuttle missions of 1978 or 1979. The proposed joint docking mission would use one of the leftover Apollo spacecraft, but we would still have to pay for the maintenance of the entire system. Despite the budgetary problem, I think it would be an advantage for us to fill the gap in scheduled manned flights.

Dr. Kissinger: Are you saying you need a Presidential decision to go ahead with the project?

Dr. Low: Yes. We also need a budgetary decision on the expenditure of these funds. Once that is done, we would have to test the idea out in Congress.

Dr. Kissinger: If the President is behind it, I don't think you would have very much to worry about. Let's not worry about what Congressional Committees may say. It will be difficult to argue against the abstract decision if this is a joint U.S.-Soviet project, with full Presidential commitment. Can you bring the whole thing to a head by summer?

Dr. Low: Yes, I think so.

Dr. Kissinger: Okay. We will get a Presidential decision before we let MacGregor's people out.

Dr. David: There is one time-critical factor in this situation: the President's Research and Development message to the Congress in March. It would be useful to have a decision on the docking mission before the message is submitted to Congress.

Dr. Kissinger: Can we get a firm decision on the mission by the end of May?

Dr. Low: We have a technical agreement now. Both sides say it is technically feasible to go ahead with it.

Dr. Kissinger: There's nothing else required of us, then, except a Presidential decision?

Dr. Low: That's right. We have already ratified the technical agreement, but the Soviets have not done so yet.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Hillenbrand) Marty, doesn't this fall into your area now?

Mr. Hillenbrand: Yes. We will keep track of it.

Dr. Kissinger: I think you should be the focal point for bringing this about.

Mr. Blee: I would like to point out that the CIA space analysts feel some frustration with this proposed mission. Our analysts feel that the Soviets are not yet ready to share a lot of their technical knowledge with us. This is particularly so in such areas as communications and telemetry. Therefore, we feel we may have some difficulty with the implementation of the mission.

Dr. Kissinger: Can't we explore this with the Soviets? Can't we tell them what our concerns are and ask them for some answers before we sign the agreement?

Mr. Blee: If we did that, we would end up with a very detailed agreement. It would certainly be a much more detailed agreement than we are now contemplating.

Dr. Low: We have already had two technical meetings with the Soviets, and we have reached agreement on certain things, such as the size of the docking vehicles and the lights to be used. There are many more issues, however, remaining to be settled before and during the mission. One of these issues, as David [Blee]⁴ said, is communications. That is a very complicated area.

Dr. Kissinger: Do we need a Presidential decision on that?

Dr. Low: No, I don't think so.

⁴ All brackets in the source text.

Dr. Kissinger: We should get down on paper all the issues concerning us and then tell the Soviets about them.⁵

Dr. Low: We would need one or more technical meetings to get all these issues settled. The next meeting isn't scheduled until June.

Dr. Kissinger: Wouldn't it be possible to move that meeting up to April? I understand your point. It would be embarrassing if the President says we are going ahead with the project—and it then collapses. But he can say that we are going ahead with it, although we realize we still have many technical details to work out. Then there is no embarrassment if the project is cancelled because of technical difficulties.

Dr. Low: You are right.

Dr. Kissinger: Does anyone have any other views on this?

Adm. Moorer: I would like to return to the communications problem. For safety purposes, there has to be a good deal of coordination. Everything will be alright if there is no emergency. If there is an emergency, however, we could be faced with a great problem.

Dr. Kissinger: I would think that the Soviets' interest in this area is as great as our interest.

Mr. Blee: In any event, I think it will be impossible to work out all the details between now and May.

Dr. Kissinger: You may be right. I don't know all the issues. Nevertheless, we should take those issues of concern to us—issues that might abort the mission—and try to settle them before May.

Mr. Blee: We have no objection to that. I want to point out, though, that there are a large number of detailed issues of concern to us.

Dr. Kissinger: Alright. We can see if the Soviets agree that we need more coordination on communications. If so, we can settle the details later. What we should do between now and May is agree on what details will be settled later. (to Mr. David) Ed, do you want to work with Dr. Low on this? If we can identify issues which may hinder the agreement, we can make decisions on them.

Dr. David: I will work with NASA on this.

Mr. Hillenbrand: We need a political decision now. When we have that, the experts can work out the modalities.

⁵ On February 16 Irwin transmitted to Kissinger the Department of State paper on U.S.-Soviet bilateral matters relevant to the summit. (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL 7 US/NIXON) The President provided guidance for bilateral negotiations on a joint space docking mission, environmental cooperation, and a joint scientific commission in NSDM 153, February 17. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-231, NSDM Files, NSDM 153)

Dr. Kissinger: We should narrow the issues down sufficiently so that by the time the President goes to Moscow we will not suddenly be faced with any hidden issues.

Mr. Hillenbrand: We need a feasibility study.

Dr. Kissinger: That's right. You know that Brezhnev won't sign any agreement at the Summit if he knows the project is not feasible.

Dr. Low: I don't want to be negative, but I should point out again that we don't have problems with the major issues. The detailed issues are the ones we're concerned with.

Dr. Kissinger: But what do we have to lose by having another round of talks with the Soviets?

Dr. Low: These detailed issues can't be solved at one meeting. We need at least a year to work them out.

Dr. Kissinger: They can say they will work these issues out with us. Then it may very well be that the mission is not feasible because of some technical reason. There's nothing wrong with that. (to Dr. Walker) Do you want to say anything?

Dr. Walker: No. I'm just listening and learning. I do think, though, that we might have some difficulty with the idea of safety.

Dr. Low: We won't have difficulty on the value of safety—just the procedures for achieving it.

Dr. David: I think these technical issues can be settled because they are not high-profile issues. The dangers are there, alright, but they can be overcome because no one would lose face by giving in a little on any particular issue.

Dr. Kissinger: Can we live with a directive saying the President wants to go ahead with the joint mission and that he wants one more meeting before the Summit to try to narrow the differences? A technical group, composed of NASA, CIA and Marty's people, should agree on the technical issues we want to discuss and then conduct the talks.

All agreed.

Dr. Low: If we do have a second round of talks, can we tell the Soviets that this topic will be on the Summit agenda?

Dr. Kissinger: Sure.

Mr. Hillenbrand: It would be a good idea to tell them that because it would give the talks a sense of urgency.

Dr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Hillenbrand) I assume Marty, that you will be telling Dobrynin, anyway.

Dr. Kissinger: Can we talk now about environmental cooperation?

Mr. Train: Yes. We have identified several areas where environmental cooperation would be beneficial to both sides. We have drafted, with the State Department, an agreement which would establish a

framework for continuing exchanges in this area. We have questions of timing, not of technical difficulties.

Dr. Kissinger: What programs do you have in mind?

Mr. Train: We recommend such things as: water problems; solid waste management; arid land problems; preservation of species; and earthquake prediction. The Soviets claim, incidentally, great expertise in earthquake prediction. If we want to reach an agreement in any of these areas in May, we have to get cracking now.

Dr. Kissinger: It seems to me that we have two choices. The President could sign a final agreement in Moscow, or he could sign a preliminary agreement, saying that there will be post-Summit negotiations in this area. I want to stress that we don't have to reach a final agreement in Moscow on every bilateral issue between us and the Soviets. On environmental matters, you and Marty could have preliminary discussions with the Soviet Embassy here on how to get the negotiations started. Then, perhaps, the President could sign an agreement in Moscow which would call for a cooperative six-month study in certain areas. This kind of an approach would take away some of the frenzy to reach final agreements. (to Dr. David) Ed, do you want to tell us about scientific cooperation?

Dr. David: We made one major proposal, to set up a joint commission on mutual scientific and technical matters. I think the commission would help us because the Soviets are ahead of us in several areas. We, of course, have done a great deal of work in areas they are interested in, too. I think it would be a good proposal to discuss at the Summit, since it would focus high level attention on the idea. What we have to do now is staff out the idea—find out how the commission would be set up and what kind of work it would do. We can go ahead with it, if you wish.

Dr. Kissinger: We can handle it by saying at the Summit that a technical group will work out the details later.

Dr. David: It can be done that way.

Mr. Hillenbrand: How would this commission affect our regular exchange agreement?

Dr. David: We would say that whatever exchanges are initiated by the commission would not be considered as part of the regular exchange agreement.

Mr. Hillenbrand: I think that's the right way to do it. Our exchange agreement is in delicate balance. If the commission pulls any exchanges out of the regular agreement, it will create problems.

Adm. Moorer: I want to point out the Law of the Sea segment in the NSSM response is, in our view, over-optimistic. I don't think we are anywhere near total agreement with the Soviets, particularly on the

issue of what constitutes an international strait. I suggest we get a substitute paper for page 14 [Law of the Sea Discussions]. We would also like to see some other changes made.

Mr. Irwin: I don't think there is any magic language in any of these papers. Even if some of them may be too optimistic, that should not change the basic concept.

Dr. Kissinger: We're not going to agree with the Soviets on the basis of these papers, anyway.

Mr. Irwin: Tom's point was a good one. We can redo some of the papers.

Adm. Moorer: We're not out of the woods yet with the Soviets on straits.

Dr. Kissinger: I want to stress that if any agency has discussions with the Soviets, Marty should be kept fully informed. And once in a while, he will inform me.

Mr. Nutter: To follow up what Tom was saying, we have some comments on trade questions. We think a few of the papers should be revised.

Dr. Kissinger: These are status reports, not negotiating papers.

Mr. Irwin: That's right.

Dr. Kissinger: We will have a decision by the end of next week on the three matters we discussed today. We should all review what items might be brought up at the Summit. There is no need for the SRG to review every item. We just want to work on those items which the President might touch at the Summit. All agencies, therefore, should let us know by the middle of next week which items they want to bring to a point before we go to Moscow.

Mr. Irwin: Do you want to say anything about the negotiation of the exchange agreement?

Dr. Kissinger: No. What about it?

Mr. Hillenbrand: This will be negotiated next month by Ambassador Beam in Moscow. It should be ready for signing in May.

Dr. Kissinger: Are there any interagency problems with it?

Mr. Hillenbrand: No.

Dr. Kissinger: We are going to make a policy statement stating that we will act as a united government at the Summit. This will be announced next week. All agencies should keep Marty scrupulously informed about their discussions with the Soviets. Let the IG know next week which items you think should be ready for signing in Moscow.

Mr. Hillenbrand: There are several other items besides the ones we discussed today. These include the exchanges agreement and the agreement on Consulates General.

Dr. Kissinger: We will have to make up a checklist for the President so that he gets all these things into his mind.

Dr. David: I will start working with John Walsh on the joint science and technology commission.

Dr. Kissinger: You won't work with the Soviets?

Dr. David: No.⁶

⁶ In a March 31 memorandum for Kissinger entitled "Review of U.S.-Soviet Negotiations," Sonnenfeldt noted that responses had been received from the Departments of State, Interior, and Defense on these various bilateral negotiations. He noted that Irwin had a priority list of issues in terms of whether agreements on them could be ready for signature at the summit, that Laird had suggested maritime-related talks "should proceed on their merits without linkage to the Moscow visit," and that Secretary of the Interior Rogers Morton had suggested that an agreement for bilateral cooperation in an additional technical research field could be signed at Moscow. (Ibid., NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 67, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Sonnenfeldt Papers [2 of 2])

49. Editorial Note

On February 14, 1972, President Nixon and his Assistant for National Security Affairs Henry Kissinger discussed the impact of the upcoming historic visit to Peking on U.S.-Soviet relations:

Kissinger: "Well, you remember, Mr. President, before this—before this move, I said that I figured that they would make a move between the Peking, and the Moscow summit, that they didn't want to settle this before the Peking summit, which would have given the impression that the Peking, that the Peking move did it for her."

Nixon: "Yeah."

Kissinger: "And they probably don't want to be in the position at Moscow—in the Moscow summit where you and Brezhnev conceivably pressure them. That Brezhnev letter to you last week was extraordinarily mild."

Nixon: "Umh."

Kissinger: "In fact, it didn't give them any support. It just quoted what the North Vietnamese were saying but it didn't say that the Soviets endorsed it. You remember, I said that before this. And therefore my calculation has always been: one, that they'd make a move between the two summits. Secondly, that there was something like a 50–50 chance that they'd settle before the election. In fact the way I put it to myself was if it looked as if you would probably win or possibly win, they'll settle before November. If it looked as if the other side would probably or possibly win, they'd certainly not settle before November."

If it was a stalemate, then I would guess they'd still try to settle before November because it's too risky to have you back in office unconstrained.

"But what you've done in the last few weeks is strip away the secret negotiations, to attack your domestic problems. In this respect, what Bob did was tremendously helpful with Hanoi because it showed that we are going for broke at home. That we are not just going to sit there and let ourselves be chopped—"

Nixon: [unclear]

Kissinger: "—and this massive movement of airpower."

Nixon: "Yes, and that helped. I know."

Kissinger: "We've moved 35 B-52s to Guam. We've taken—"

Nixon: [unclear]

Kissinger: "Yep. Yep, we've put two more aircraft carriers on station. We only moved one out there, but they've always had one on leave. We've cancelled all leave. That's how the news hit about the one coming back from Hong Kong."

Nixon: "We've only had one out there?"

Kissinger: "Well we had—Actually, we had one on stage, one being repaired, and one on leave."

Nixon: [unclear]

Kissinger: "And there will be another one in San Diego. Now we have four on station."

Nixon: "Well not yet"

Kissinger: "Well we will have on March 1st. But we have three on station within another week. So I think this whole combination of events—their fear of the pressure. It isn't just that for the first time our dealings with them, in two administrations, that they have asked for a meeting. All previous meetings we've asked for. But also that they have asked for lunch. I mean, I know, Mr. President—I'm not saying they're going to settle. I'm saying if nothing else happens except that they've invited me to lunch. It means we have a month of no offensive, almost certainly. It means that they—"

Nixon: "You'll get a hell of a tip against—"

Kissinger: "The probability is, Mr. President, that this is not going to be the only meeting. We have never had just one meeting with them."

Nixon: "But the thing I'm thinking, though, Henry is that they may be willing for other reasons"

[unclear exchange]

Nixon: "—with the hope that we will lay off our preemptive air strikes."

Kissinger: "They think you are getting ready to club the North Vietnamese. There's no question about that."

Nixon: "That's right. But now I'm not sure we want to wait."

Kissinger: "Oh, I wouldn't—we can wait 'till the 8th."

Nixon: "Well I—you can't wait too late because then you'll have it just before the Russian [unclear]—"

Kissinger: "Mr. President, you're coming back on March 1. Presumably you'll report to the nation on the second or third."

Nixon: "Is that right? I don't know."

Kissinger: "I don't know what the date is. But you wouldn't want to divert everybody that week anyway."

Nixon: "No."

Kissinger: "So we're talking about a week or two."

Nixon: "Right."

Kissinger: "That is—"

Nixon: "All right. Understand, I'm just trying to see what would go through their minds if they're trying to screw us."

Kissinger: "Well I think, Mr. President—"

Nixon: "[unclear] The second thing it made me think of was that—they must, in other words, you've got to assume that their purpose is not to invite you to talk. Their purpose is to keep us from doing something else. One is that they're afraid that we're going to hit the North. Fine, they've accomplished that purpose."

Kissinger: "Yeah, but we won't do more than 24 or 48 hours anyway."

Nixon: "What? I know that. But what I mean is, what I mean is if that occurs—now that's interesting. The other thing is, if you put it to them on this offensive thing—I can't believe that they would tell you on the other side of the coin, now I might be wrong, but they would have you for a private meeting and then proceed to kick the hell out of us."

Kissinger: "It's almost inconceivable."

Nixon: "How could they? Because that's why [unclear]."

Kissinger: "Absolutely."

Nixon: "Because if, for example, let's put it another way. If you accepted the meeting and then they kicked the hell out of us and then we cancelled we're in a [unclear] if you warn them in advance. Right?"

Kissinger: "That's right. Mr. President, you've been very tough with them. You know, we cancelled this Thursday's meeting because of the Versailles conference. I mean, we're just—we have to look at it through their eyes. They must think we are looking for an excuse to kill them in the North."

Nixon: "You think so?"

Kissinger: "Oh, yeah. The last few times we cancelled meetings we've then hit them for 5 days. I believe that our December strikes did a hell of a lot more damage to them than our idiotic Air Force will admit."

Nixon: [laughter]

Kissinger: "Because if they hadn't they would have had people there looking at their holes."

Nixon: "Yeah. That they didn't amount to anything?"

Kissinger: "That they didn't amount to anything. That they hit the open fields. That they hit peasant houses. That they wanted the French to protect them and the French said let's look at where the damage is, they refused to show them. And we've had another report that has been particularly—they inflicted enormous casualties on some troop barracks. Now, I wouldn't place this report in the absolute context that it is, I didn't put it in here—"

Nixon: "Sure."

Kissinger: "Because you don't want to bother with these things."

Nixon: "I know."

Kissinger: "So they are worried that you may go for broke against them in the North."

Nixon: "Um-hmm."

Kissinger: "And that they want to stop. On the other hand, you and I know that you were going to go for broke against the North. So that what they're going to stop is not something we wanted to do."

Nixon: "That's right."

Kissinger: "Secondly, they are terrified that when all is said and done, Peking and Moscow are not going to let them screw up the whole détente."

Nixon: "You think so?"

Kissinger: "Yeah. After all—"

Nixon: "I must say, when you read though, totally all the records of Chou En-lai's comments and so forth [unclear], it's a hard-line god-damn thing."

Kissinger: "Well it's hard-line. But in practice—"

Nixon: "On the other hand, they show that they are susceptible to [unclear]. They always show that we make big promises that we can't keep, and we never do this. And yet, their behavior in the India-Pakistan thing was goddamn timid."

Kissinger: "That's right."

Nixon: "They talked about the Russians being timid. They were timid. Chou En-lai told you in July that they would not stand idly by. And then he went on and [unclear]. And then afterwards admitted Bhutto let you down. Now they know what the hell they did."

Kissinger: "Oh, exactly. So—but also the North, actually with respect to the North Vietnamese, you'd have to read the whole record."

What they do is they're asking for, cuddling for, the things we are going to do anyway. Like troop withdrawal."

Nixon: "Yeah."

Kissinger: "They've never done much about the political conditions."

Nixon: "Yeah, I noticed that. I noticed that."

Kissinger: "So the Chinese are building up a fierce record on those issues, which are not contested, and they have been no help to the North Vietnamese. They killed their seven points by having the announcement of your July—of your visit of July 15. So that the North Vietnamese will not forgive. I believe that they did make an effort to get them to negotiate because for about 6 weeks after you were there—after your announcement of July 15, the North Vietnamese press were beside themselves. Then in November after I was there for another 6 weeks the North Vietnamese press was yelling at them. Then [North Vietnamese Premier] Pham Van Dong went to Peking and in public speeches never declared complete identity of interest between the two countries. It's only in the last few weeks as we are going there that Peking has been making some noises. But even so when I proposed that if Le Duc Tho was in Peking that I was prepared to meet with him there, they sent back a very mild reply saying we are not going to meddle in the Vietnamese war but you could read it both ways. And the reason I sent that message was so that if the Russians came through with an invitation to meet in Moscow, we could then go to Peking and say we offered it to you first. On the other hand, I believe the more we can get the Russians to press for a meeting in Moscow, which they want for their reasons, the more eager Hanoi will be to have the meeting in Paris because Hanoi will under no circumstances in my view settle in either of the other Communist capitals."

Nixon: "I see."

Kissinger: "So the reason I'm going—I'm going to see Dobrynin tomorrow and I'm going to put it to him again that I'm eager to meet them in Moscow. And I'll bet it's a poker game. It's a way of—I already know they proposed a meeting in Paris."

Nixon: "Yeah."

Kissinger: "There isn't a chance of a snowball in hell that they will accept a meeting in Moscow. They've already objected in October so they—"

Nixon: "Did it work?"

Kissinger: "But if Moscow proposes a meeting, it's to them a sign that Moscow is eager to settle. I'm certain that Moscow is playing such a big game that they are not going to let Hanoi screw it up in May. So they're up against a whole series of deadlines. Then they see you—if you look at the press, say look at *Time* and *Newsweek* this week, it's

a little play of the State of the World report, which is on the whole positive. But above all it's China. So they know for the next 3 weeks." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, Oval Office, Conversation No. 670–13) The editors transcribed the portion of the conversation printed here specifically for this volume.

50. Memorandum From Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, undated.

Soviet Policy and Vietnam July–November 1971

There is some evidence that in the period between the announcement of the President's visit to China and the North Vietnamese refusal to continue the secret talks, Soviet policy toward a peaceful settlement in Vietnam significantly hardened. While the exact advice they gave to Hanoi is not clear, the thrust of the Soviet position in this period was that Hanoi should persevere with the military struggle, lest the United States succeed in promoting a solution through its contacts with Peking.

The shift in the Soviet attitude must be viewed in the context of the Soviet diplomatic counteroffensive which was activated in July–September in the wake of the President's announcement of the Peking visit.

—In the West, the Soviets accelerated the negotiations over Berlin; in late July they urged an end to the negotiations at the secondary levels and that the Ambassadors go into almost continuous sessions, which, in fact, led to the agreement of August 28;²

—In the SALT talks, after rigidly insisting on one ABM proposal for almost a year, in early August the Soviets offered three new alternatives, and in September a still further variant;

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 146, 1972 Offensive—Miscellaneous. Secret. In an attached February 15 covering memorandum to Kissinger, Sonnenfeldt wrote: "We discussed this last week and you asked for a paper that you might use in Peking. It is attached. Although slightly tailored for the purpose envisaged, I consider this a plausible piece of analysis which fits the evidence as we know it." A notation by Kissinger on the covering memorandum reads: "Take on trip."

² The agreement which led to the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin, signed on September 3, 1971.

—A number of outstanding invitations for high level visits were accepted; Kosygin to Algeria and Morocco, and later to Canada, Denmark and Norway; Brezhnev to France, and of course Podgorny to Hanoi;

—In the East, Soviet overtures toward Japan were strengthened, a new trade agreement was arranged in September; talks were held on Japanese participation in the development of Siberian resources and Shelepin traveled to Tokyo for a Trade Union meeting;

—Most important were the hints of a softening of the Soviet position on the Southern Kuriles. According to reports, Podgorny assured the leaders of the Japanese Communist Party that the issue was not closed—potentially a major reversal of Soviet policy;

—In the subcontinent, of course, Soviet policy centered on the new treaty signed on August 9 with India³; while at the time this may have relieved internal pressures on Mrs. Gandhi, subsequent events suggest that this treaty was a virtual Soviet guarantee of support in whatever action against Pakistan India chose; Soviet support for Indian military action was reported by some sources after Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Moscow in late September. One report indicated the Soviets promised a "diversionary" action in Sinkiang if China threatened to intervene.

In short, the Soviets were conducting a policy aimed at encircling the Chinese and strengthening Moscow's position on the Chinese flanks.

Against this background, Soviet policy in Hanoi, however, was probably ambiguous. On the one hand, a settlement of the war held opportunities for the USSR to strengthen its own position through post-war economic aid, and to lessen North Vietnamese dependence on Chinese supply lines, once hostilities ended. On the other hand, the Soviets were concerned that their own leverage would greatly diminish after the war, and that China would be the predominant power in Southeast Asia. While the Soviets might have had no choice but to tolerate such a situation, an end to the war plus a rapprochement between the US and China would jeopardize the future of the Soviet position in Asia.

One alternative for Soviet policy, therefore, was to encourage the North Vietnamese in the military effort, at least through early 1972 until after the President's visit to China. This might disrupt the visit, or gain a period of time in which the Soviets could try to drive a wedge between Peking and Hanoi by playing on North Vietnamese concern over contacts between Washington and Peking. Accusations of secret deals and collusion, in fact, became a strong theme in the Soviet propaganda treatment.

³ The Soviet-Indian Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation.

Podgorny's visit to Hanoi (October 3–8) may well have been a turning point. It occurred after the North Vietnamese, in the secret talks, had rejected our proposals of August 16,⁴ and before we made our proposal of October 11.⁵

There were several features to Podgorny's visit:

—For the first time Moscow emphasized, in a Podgorny speech on October 4,⁶ the imminence of a "military victory"; though he endorsed the 7 point plan, the effect of his remarks was to downgrade the possibilities of a peaceful settlement;

—This line appeared in the final communiqué in the form of a Soviet commitment to continue its support—military, economic, and political—until "complete victory;"

—Second, Podgorny's delegation signed a new military aid agreement that reportedly will *exceed* last year's, and amount to more than \$500 million; the supply of trucks will be an important feature;

—An economic assistance agreement was also concluded; for the first time there was a mention of the USSR participation in "long range" economic development—a reference to the USSR position in Vietnam after the war ends.

Subsequent to Podgorny's visit the North Vietnamese did agree to another session of the secret talks. In the period that followed between the setting of the November 20 meeting and its cancellation on November 17 there is one Soviet event worth noting.

At the time of Dr. Kissinger's second visit to Peking, Brezhnev addressed the Vietnam issues in unusually frank and critical terms during his visit to Paris. On October 27, he warned: "This problem cannot be solved either by attempts to impose an alien will on Vietnam by means of force, or by way of secret combination behind the Vietnamese people's back."⁷ It is reasonable to assume that if Brezhnev was taking this line in public, in private the Soviets were telling the North Vietnamese that secret bargains were dangerous. Interestingly, Brezhnev ignored the 7 point proposal and limited himself to saying that the only correct way to solve the issue was to end "foreign interference."

By the time of the cancellation of the secret session, however, the Soviets were again stressing the value of a negotiated settlement. For example, on November 16, the day prior to Hanoi's cancellation, the

⁴ The eight-point U.S. proposal offered on this date was unpublished but later revealed by Nixon in his January 25 speech on Vietnam; see footnote 2, Document 40.

⁵ See footnote 3, Document 39.

⁶ For text, see *Izvestia*, October 4, 1971.

⁷ For text, see *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, November 30, 1971, vol. XXIII, No. 44, pp. 4–6.

Soviet newspaper *TRUD* stated “the way out of the Indochinese impasse does not lie along the path of war, but at the negotiating table.” Perhaps, by then they knew this was a relatively safe position since secret negotiations were coming to an end.

The evidence is not conclusive that the Soviets actually intervened to sabotage the secret talks. But the burden of their policy seems to have been to play down negotiations, at least for a time, and to stress to Hanoi the dangers of collusion between Washington and Peking.

This would be consistent with a report we received in July which stated that Moscow’s general line, as reported from Eastern Europe, was that “the USSR wanted peace in Vietnam, but did not wish it to be brought about by China. The Soviet Union would almost certainly raise objection to any terms for a solution that would be agreed upon between the US and China.” As was evident from Soviet propaganda in this period July–November, the Soviets were at pains to make it appear that any US proposals were tactical maneuvers growing out of Washington’s overtures to Peking—a line designed to play on Hanoi’s fear that the great powers would reach a settlement against North Vietnam’s interests.

In sum, we can conclude (a) the Soviets do not necessarily oppose any peaceful/political settlement; but (b) they will work against one that is reached without their participation, or that grows out of any Chinese-American contacts; (c) to the extent that the Soviets will work toward a settlement, it will only be one that ensures their own dominance in Southeast Asia, as a component of their broader policy of encircling China; and (d) failing that, they have supported Hanoi’s rigidity.⁸

⁸ In a February 25 memorandum to Kissinger entitled “New Frictions Between Moscow and Hanoi?”, Sonnenfeldt described recent press reports that Moscow was ready to make a deal over Vietnam to prevent further Sino-American rapprochement. “The facts do not justify these extreme conclusions or interpretations, but there is a suggestion of DRV concern over the Soviet position,” Sonnenfeldt concluded. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 717, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Vol. XIX)

51. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, February 15, 1972, 1 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

The atmosphere at the lunch was friendly but still somewhat more reserved than at previous meetings. Dobrynin wanted to turn to the Middle East right away, but I opened the conversation by telling him that it was best if we took care of other pending business first.

I therefore handed Dobrynin a letter from the President [attached at Tab A] in reply to Brezhnev's letter of January 17th.² The President's letter allocated responsibilities for the preparation of the Summit. Dobrynin said it would be very useful.

We then went through a series of secondary issues.³ With respect to space cooperation, I told Dobrynin that I recommended that we bring matters to a point where joint docking could be agreed to in Moscow. With respect to environmental studies, I told him that we were prepared to have preliminary talks leading to an agreement in Moscow

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 1]. Top Secret; Sensitive; Eyes Only. The meeting was held in the Soviet Embassy. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it. Kissinger sent a summary of this meeting to the President on March 6. (Ibid.) According to Kissinger's Record of Schedule, the luncheon meeting was from 1:10 to 3:32 p.m. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976) Sonnenfeldt summarized the state of bilateral affairs for Kissinger's meeting with Dobrynin in a February 14 memorandum. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 67, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Sonnenfeldt Papers [2 of 2])

² All brackets in the source text. See Tab B, Document 39.

³ Other secondary issues involved Greece and Cyprus. During this luncheon, Dobrynin gave Kissinger a note from the Soviet Government which noted "serious consequences both militarily and politically" if the U.S. 6th Fleet established a base in the territory of Greece. That same day Sokolov delivered a note to Haig from the Soviet Government protesting the interference of Greece in the internal affairs of Cyprus and pledged that it would become an issue for discussion at the Moscow summit. On February 17 Haig handed Sokolov a note which in part read: "The President wishes to assure the Soviet leaders that the United States opposes any actions that would aggravate the situation in Cyprus or in that general region of the world. The efforts of the United States are designed to bring about a restoration of calm and a normalization of this situation. To this end, it has endeavored to use its influence to urge restraint on all the parties concerned, and it will continue to do so. President Nixon welcomes this opportunity to make his views known to the Soviet leaders, particularly since he feels certain that Soviet efforts are likewise directed at calming the situation." The full text of these notes is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 67, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Sonnenfeldt Papers [2 of 2].

on environmental matters similar to what had been signed on health between Richardson and Dobrynin.

Trade

On trade, I told Dobrynin that we were ready to go ahead now on the settlement of lend-lease, that we were prepared also to make an agreement on grain sales, but that other matters such as MFN and Export-Import Bank guarantees would have to wait for the Summit. We were prepared, however, to look at these in a constructive manner.

Dobrynin asked how we would handle the trade issue concretely. I suggested that we send Butz to Moscow to negotiate the grain deals but that he could have some other experts with him. Dobrynin said the difficulty with this procedure was that grain imports were handled by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and that therefore there would be no opposite number for Butz. I asked Dobrynin what exactly he wanted the Commerce Department, specifically Peterson, to discuss. He said what they most wanted in Moscow was to continue the discussions with Scott, looking toward a comprehensive trade agreement. I said it seemed to me that none of these matters was yet ready for signature. Dobrynin said that in that case the best way perhaps to proceed would be to send Butz accompanied by some expert from the Commerce Department. This would then lead to a visit by the Soviet Foreign Trade Minister to the United States, followed by a visit of Peterson to the Soviet Union. I said we had no trouble with the principle; our major concern was the timing, to make sure that these visits were more than just symbolic and had something concrete to talk about.

Middle East

We then turned to the Middle East. Dobrynin asked whether I was prepared to make a specific proposal. I said that with respect to the interim settlement, I understood that the Israelis would be prepared to go back, but no further than the western edge of the passes; that they insisted on freedom of navigation; that some uniformed personnel could cross the Canal, though not members of the armed forces, but personnel that had responsibilities for security of the population; and that the ceasefire should be for two years.

Dobrynin asked what I meant by military personnel. I said, well, it would be something better than the doormen in the hotels in Cairo, and that, seriously, this was a test of our ingenuity to figure out. Dobrynin then asked about the overall settlement. I said that as I understood the Israelis, they wanted some rectification of the borders and also some presence beyond whatever borders would be agreed to that would not necessarily be attached to sovereignty and that did not in every respect have to be military. Dobrynin said a change of the border was absolutely out of the question; it would lead to a breakdown

in negotiations. The question of presence was more discussable, he said, but he waited for me to make some concrete proposals. Dobrynin remarked that he was in a way disappointed that I always seemed to tell him what the Israelis might accept. He was much more interested to know what the United States would accept. This was one of the reasons why the Soviet Union had approached us.

In any event, Dobrynin continued, he felt our relations were now in a curious state. On the one hand, his talks with me were going very well. On the other hand, there had been a whole series of events that created some doubts in the Soviet Union. For example, the World Report—while the chapter on the Soviet Union was very constructive—contained many references in the Middle East, Defense, and South Asia chapters that were totally unjustified. Nothing that the Soviet Union had done in South Asia was in any sense directed against the United States; Dobrynin could assure me of that on the basis of his conversations. He also found our SLBM program extremely disturbing. This was coupled with what Dobrynin considered our tough behavior on the issues of the two trawlers and the arrest of the spy; this could easily give suspicious people in Moscow the impression that we were heading into a new hard period.

I denied this, stressing that the Soviet press was certainly not very friendly towards us.

Dobrynin said that the fact of the matter was that there were many in the Soviet Politburo who were very suspicious of the policies of détente with the United States, and that had to be kept in mind. He also was bound to say that he found me the most difficult American with whom he had negotiated in his ten years of association. I said that what counted was the results, not the ease or difficulty with which they were achieved, and I had the impression that we had made reasonable progress on a number of issues. Dobrynin agreed.

SALT

We then turned to SALT.⁴ Dobrynin said that the new American SLBM program made an agreement very difficult. It would not be easy in the Soviet Union, he said, to explain why a freeze would not

⁴ In a February 10 memorandum, Sonnenfeldt supplied Kissinger with a list of issues to discuss with Dobrynin on SALT, including the topics of SLBMs, ABMs, "duration and linkage," and an ICBM "freeze." (Ibid., Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 2]) Smith also covered these issues in his SALT delegation report of February 16 which reviewed the "Vienna round" of November 15, 1971–February 4, 1972. (Ibid., Box 199, Agency Files, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Vol. IV, 1 January 1972) In addition, Kissinger and Smith discussed the SALT negotiations during a telephone conversation the evening of February 15. (Library of Congress, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

simply be a device for stopping an ongoing Soviet program while giving the United States an opportunity to tool up for a new submarine program. The military people had been on the defensive before, but now he could foresee that they would be very much on the offensive, and this was a factor that could not be neglected. He would have a very difficult time convincing Moscow that an SLBM deal was in the cards, partly because he thought that our program was neatly timed to start right after the expiration date of any projected freeze.

As for ABMs, Dobrynin said he wondered whether we would settle for the Soviet proposal plus giving us two sites, of which one did not have to be Washington. I said I thought we should handle the SLBM and the ABM question together and that our position was not at this time subject to modification.⁵

I told Dobrynin I would look into his complaints on the trawlers, and the meeting adjourned. [This matter was soon afterwards resolved through telephone conversations with Attorney General Mitchell, records of which are at Tab B.]⁶

⁵ A story on the compromise on ABMs based on sources reportedly within ACDA appeared in *The New York Times* on February 18. Kissinger and Nixon were upset by the leak and directed Smith to institute measures to prevent such occurrences in the future. See Haldeman, *The Haldeman Diaries: Multimedia Edition*, diary entries for February 18 and 19. Haldeman's diary entries and a February 19 handwritten message from Nixon to Smith is in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, Haldeman Files, Box 45, Notes, Jan.–March 1972, Part I.

⁶ Attachment B consisted of a series of three transcripts of telephone conversations on two Soviet fishing trawlers that had been seized by the U.S. Coast Guard in Alaskan waters. In a February 15 conversation with Kissinger, Mitchell agreed to look into the matter. He reported back the next morning that the trawlers could be released if the Soviet Government paid a \$250,000 fine. Kissinger telephoned Dobrynin at 2:30 p.m. on February 16 and informed him of the argument, especially noting: "I understand they talked about \$300,000 but we interceded." Dobrynin responded that his government likely would agree to the settlement of the issue "because I am rather looking at the political side. It's a huge sum of money, though." (Library of Congress, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) In a February 21 memorandum to Kissinger, Sonnenfeldt reported that, in a "somewhat hastened" departure, the Soviet trawlers left Alaska on February 18. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 991, Haig Chronological Files, February 18–29, 1972)

Tab A

Letter From President Nixon to Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev⁷

Washington, February 15, 1972.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I have read with interest your letter of January 17, 1972, and welcome the fact that both of us approach the development of relations between our countries and our forthcoming meeting in May in the same constructive spirit. I, of course, share your hope that this year will mark substantial improvements in our relations which in turn will strengthen international cooperation and peace generally.

I am closely following the discussions in the existing confidential channel through which the ground is being prepared for our discussions in May.⁸ I am likewise keeping in close touch with other specific negotiations in progress between representatives of our governments and believe that there is reason to be confident that significant new agreements in several fields of cooperation will soon be reached.

As preparatory discussions between our two governments intensify in the remaining weeks preceding our meeting, I believe that it might be helpful to outline for you my views on the topics which should be reserved for discussion within the existing confidential channel and those which would be better left to normal negotiations between the representatives of our governments. In my view, the topics best suited for the existing confidential channel would include: discussion of the future developments in the Middle East, the situation in

⁷ No classification marking. A handwritten notation reads: "Delivered by HAK to D, 1:15 p.m., 2/15/72." Sonnenfeldt drafted the letter on February 2. (Ibid., Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 2]) According to a February 14 covering note to Kissinger, Haig had reworked the draft letter into its final form. (Ibid.)

⁸ That morning Nixon and Kissinger discussed arrangements for the summit trip prior to Kissinger's meeting with Dobrynin. Kissinger told Nixon: "You've made more progress with the Soviet Union than any other President. The Western alliance is in better shape. It's not in good shape. It's certainly in better shape." Kissinger also suggested that Nixon include stops in Belgium on the way over for a NATO meeting, at Kiev as a secondary stop while in the Soviet Union, and in Tehran following the summit. However, the President felt that Rogers should go to Brussels. "I think we should do the Shah anyway. It's a nice flip on the Russian trip," Nixon said, adding that the reason that could be given would be that "he has a long-standing commitment to the Shah and this is the opportunity to do it on the way back." The dates for the visit were set for the week following May 22. (Ibid., White House Tapes, February 15, 1972, 9:12 a.m.–12:47 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 672–2)

Southeast Asia, and those broad policy questions dealing with arms control, especially the outcome of the crucial talks on the limitation of strategic arms and perhaps some preliminary exchanges on Mutual Force Reduction. With respect to the talks on strategic arms and within the existing confidential channel, we must now concentrate on those points where our positions still diverge so that the period after the resumption of talks in Helsinki can be used to put the final touches to the agreement. As in the case of the talks that culminated in the announcement of May 20, 1971, I am hopeful that this channel will lead us to success.

The existing confidential channel also appears to be best for discussions on the overall objectives of the May meeting and especially discussions as to the final outcome of the meeting, to include consideration of a final statement or joint communiqué.

Finally, I have previously set forth my views concerning the European question. It is my hope that the Berlin agreement which is now complete in its essential parts will soon be brought into force. This is precisely the kind of concrete step to which you refer in your letter. I continue to believe that in Europe, as elsewhere, a true *détente* can best be achieved by precise and concrete understanding. That is why I suggested in my last letter that informal and private exchanges to clarify the concrete objectives of a possible multilateral conference would be helpful. Preliminary discussions on this topic would also be best confined to the existing confidential channel. I will, of course, be prepared to discuss these matters during our meetings in Moscow in the expectation that such a discussion would make subsequent discussions in regular channels and eventual negotiations between all the interested governments fruitful.

With respect to other discussions between our two governments, I visualize that normal channels should be used to advance our respective positions on a full range of bilateral issues, including trade, cultural exchanges, environment, health and space cooperation. Also included in regular channels would be the continuation of discussions on Incidents at Sea. In this forum, discussions dealing with preparations for our meeting in May should be confined to such topics as a formal agenda and the administrative modalities of the visit itself.

I am confident that by confining our discussions within the respective frameworks outlined above, maximum progress can be achieved on the full range of issues we will wish to discuss during our forthcoming meeting.

Mr. Secretary, I believe that on the basis of our written communications and of the other exchanges that have taken place, my visit to your country will be an important milestone in the improvement of re-

lations between our countries. Certainly, that will be the objective toward which American representatives will be working with those of the Soviet Union in the coming weeks of preparation.

Sincerely,

Richard Nixon⁹

⁹ Printed from a copy that indicates Nixon signed the original.

52. Editorial Note

President Richard Nixon visited China during the last weeks of February 1972. With a party of over three dozen government officials that included Secretary of State Rogers, Assistant to the President Henry Kissinger, and White House Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman, the President left Washington on February 17 and returned February 28. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary)

Prior to the visit, Nixon received extensive preparatory briefings. Among the papers the President reviewed were reports on China's perception of Soviet actions in various regions of the world and recommendations for the position that Nixon should take during his discussions with Chinese officials while in Peking. The briefing books for the trip are *ibid.*, NSC Files, Box 847, China Trip/Vietnam Negotiations, China Trip Books I–VI.) Documentation on the trip, including the conversation among Nixon, Kissinger, and Chou quoted below, is in *Foreign Relations*, 1969–1976, volume XVII, China, 1969–1972.

The morning of their departure, Nixon, Kissinger, and Rogers briefed the Congressional leadership on the context of the China trip: "They, naturally, wondered if it was an anti-Soviet move. The Secretary said we assured the Russians that it certainly was not and until recently the Russian press has been quite restrained on the matter. The President interrupted to say that we are trying to embark on a very limited and very even-handed policy with China and the Soviet Union. He noted that the administration was playing them very equal." (Memorandum for the President's Files by William Timmons, February 17; National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, President's Office Files, Box 87, Memoranda for the President, December 12, 1971–February 20, 1972) Kissinger also made a final telephone call to Dobrynin that morning to bid farewell. (Transcript of telephone conversation between Kissinger and Dobrynin, February 17, 8:25 a.m.;

Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

Among the various meetings in China, Nixon and Kissinger's discussion with Premier Chou En-lai on February 23 dealt most directly with the Soviet Union and its triangular relation to Sino-American relations. Chou recapitulated the history of recent Sino-Soviet relations, especially the Sino-Soviet border dispute during 1969 and the perceived threat on both sides. Kissinger stated that the "Soviets are a little bit hysterical on this subject." Nixon added: "Certainly China is not a threat to the Soviet Union at this point because of the nuclear superiority of the Soviet Union over China. So what we think is that they are not so concerned about the border, which is a pretext, but about the leadership and doctrine of what they say is the socialist camp, which you don't accept. They also must be afraid of whether China could become powerful in the future, because the Soviet leaders in my experience tend to take a long view. Certainly we will conduct ourselves with complete correctness in dealing with them and will make every effort to see that no pretext will be created by this meeting to indicate we are setting up a condominium against them." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, President's Office Files, Box 87, Memoranda for the President) Drawing on the experiences of the China trip, Nixon insisted that when he went to Moscow he would not be available to the press and would not include the rest of the party in his sightseeing tours. (Haldeman's diary entry for February 26; *The Haldeman Diaries: Multimedia Edition*, and in the National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Subject Files, Staff Memos and Office Files, Haldeman Files, Box 45, Haldeman Notes, Jan.–March 1972 [Part 2])

53. Note From the Soviet Leadership to President Nixon¹

Moscow, February 23, 1972.

Moscow acknowledges receipt of the President's letter to L.I. Brezhnev of February 15² on questions concerning the forthcoming

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 1]. No classification marking. According to the handwritten notations on the document, Haig received the note from Sokolov at 4:45 p.m. on February 23.

² Printed as Tab A to Document 51.

summit meeting in May. In a while we will, of course, outline our considerations on this score.

But at the moment the following question arises with L.I. Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders. What indeed is going on?

On the one hand, there is a conversation going between us, mostly in a confidential matter, on improving relations between our countries, on strengthening peace and international security. It is precisely in this way that we agreed with the President to conduct preparation for the summit meeting too.

On the other hand, in the United States more and more frequently statements are made and documents published, which contain totally groundless reproaches addressed to the Soviet Union and in which its policy is presented in a distorted light and intentions are ascribed to it which we never had and do not have. And this is being done not by private persons or small functionaries. What is meant here is the statements of the President himself and such a document as his foreign policy report to the U.S. Congress outlining the fundamental approach to the questions of relations with foreign states, including the Soviet Union.

Or, to take as another example, the speeches and recent report of the U.S. Secretary of Defense Laird which abound with concoctions alleging a "Soviet threat". Largely the same can be said also about that report, the only difference being that Secretary Laird decided to apply still more zealous efforts in the same direction.

What is all this being done for? Indeed, that kind of statements make a deliberately distorted picture of the Soviet Union's policy and accordingly shape the public opinion, setting it in fact against improvement in the Soviet-American relations.

It is also quite clear that we, on our part, cannot and shall not bypass that kind of distortions. We have to explain to the public opinion the real state of affairs regarding both our policy and the policy of the U.S. But the main thing is that all this, in our deep conviction, is not at all facilitating but, rather, can only hamper the conversation which is being held between ourselves in a confidential manner. It is, indeed, impossible to conduct business in a double way at the same time: in a business-like way and in parallel also in another one which contrasts the first one. To try to merge both these ways is in practice unrealistic. It seems to us that the President cannot but agree with that.

On our part, we believe, as before, that both sides should have to work for better Soviet-American relations and to prepare ourselves for the summit meeting accordingly. With all the existing differences which are viewed by both sides with open eyes, we duly appraise the significance that the meeting may have, proceeding from the responsibility

of our countries for the preservation of peace and from the assumption that it is desirable to use their possibilities for influencing the general international situation. Relaxation of international tensions and improvement of relations between the USSR and the U.S. would be, we are confident, in the interests of our peoples and other peoples of the world. Such is our firm line and we are consistently following it.

It is important, however, that both sides have the same approach as regards the main thing—the genuine desire to constructively solve the questions which have accumulated. That is why we decided to express the above thoughts in hopes that this will be useful from the viewpoint of achieving those aims which, as we suppose, both sides set for themselves, specifically in connection with the forthcoming meeting as well.³

³ Haig forwarded the note to Nixon and Kissinger in China in telegram WH20461/ToHAK 112, February 24. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 717, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Vol. XXIX) In a telephone conversation with Dobrynin, Haig relayed their response: "And they wanted you to know—both the President and Henry—that they have read it very carefully and understand it and Henry will give you a reply at some length upon his return. In the interim they want you to be assured the sentiments of the President are reflected in the policy that has been outlined to you and which he intends to fully implement." (Transcript of telephone conversation between Haig and Dobrynin, February 25, 9:10 a.m.; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File) Following Nixon and Kissinger's return from China, Kissinger told Nixon that "last week the Russians sent us a message saying, 'What's going on? You keep criticizing us,'" to which the President responded that the Soviets were in fact not being criticized. Kissinger added: "I sent them a message saying quiet down; we are serious about pursuing a détente. Since then there have been no opposing articles and TASS so far has communicated only in a very factual way." Nixon directed that Kissinger see Dobrynin and promise him a meeting with the President at a later date. (Transcript of telephone conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, February 28, 10:55 p.m.; *ibid.*)

54. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 1, 1972, 1 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Ambassador Dobrynin
Henry A. Kissinger

The luncheon meeting took place at my initiative because I had told Dobrynin prior to our departure for China that I would brief him as soon as we came back.

China

Dobrynin was extremely jovial but clearly under instructions not to ask any questions or show any excessive interest. He violated these instructions consistently, in the form of pretending that while he knew his government was not particularly interested, it would help if I volunteered certain information. I gave him a brief rundown of the communiqué, which followed pretty carefully the President's remarks on arrival at Andrews Air Force Base on the evening of February 28. [Attached at Tab B.]²

Dobrynin asked a number of very specific questions. He said first of all that he did not see enough of a quid pro quo in the communiqué.³ What exactly did the Chinese get out of it? I replied that I supposed they wanted to normalize relations with us, as they had constantly stated. Dobrynin said there had to be something more to it, and he wondered whether any agreement had been made at the expense of the Soviet Union. I said that since he had consistently refused to tell me what he considered to be at the expense of the Soviet Union, I found it difficult to answer. But I could not imagine that anything we discussed could be at the expense of the Soviet Union. We stuck by our position in the President's Foreign Policy Report,⁴ which is to say that we would not intervene either in the ideological or in the border

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 1]. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. The meeting was held in the Map Room at the White House. This memorandum was attached to a covering memorandum from Kissinger to Nixon, March 8, that summarized the discussion. A notation on the covering memorandum indicates the President saw it.

² Attached but not printed; for text, see *Public Papers: Nixon*, 1972, pp. 381–384.

³ Reference is to the Shanghai Communiqué of February 27, for text, see Department of State *Bulletin*, March 20, 1972, pp. 435–438.

⁴ See Document 47.

dispute between China and the Soviet Union which we understood were the only outstanding issues.

Dobrynin asked whether I felt that the People's Republic felt threatened by the Soviet Union. I said I was a very poor judge of which country felt threatened, but the People's Republic did not express such a fear to us. Dobrynin said it is absolutely ridiculous; he knew for a fact that the Soviet Union had no intention of attacking the People's Republic. Dobrynin asked whether we got into the question of the Sino-Soviet border dispute. I said we did not, first because we had no competence to understand it, secondly because we were going to be meticulous about not getting involved even to the extent of getting briefed on it. Dobrynin said well at least you could get the information that would be helpful to you. I said our desire was to stay out of the border dispute.

Dobrynin inquired whether I foresaw any long-term credits to the People's Republic. I said that any move in the economic field would be made with the Soviet Union first, though it was our general policy to keep them both at roughly the same level. Dobrynin asked what I thought the Chinese attitude would be if the Soviet Union and we made a number of major agreements. I said the People's Republic had no particular sensitivity with respect to that. Dobrynin concluded by saying it would be helpful if the President replied to the letter that was received while he was in China,⁵ because that would put matters in clear perspective in Moscow.

The Middle East

We then turned to preparations for the Summit. Dobrynin said things had gone more slowly than he had anticipated. Taking the Middle East first, he said they had offered us a clear horse-trade: Soviet presence for, in effect, the 1967 borders. I said they had never said Soviet presence for the 1967 borders, but Soviet presence for a final settlement. I asked Dobrynin whether the Soviet Union could not make some proposition on border rectifications and the presence of some Israeli bases beyond the 1967 line. Dobrynin said that I had to understand that this was a very difficult problem for them. First, if we were talking about minor rectifications, they could be considered. If we were talking about some Israeli presence beyond the border, that could also be considered. But it was impossible to ask the Soviet Union to originate these proposals; it was much better to put them in the position of reacting to our proposal. I said that was fair enough, and I would see whether I could come up with anything within two weeks.

⁵ Document 53.

SALT

We then turned to SALT. Dobrynin said that our new submarine program had shaken a lot of people in the Soviet Union, including himself. He did not mind telling me that he had always been in favor of including the submarines, but now it had to look in Moscow as if we were trying to stop the Soviet program while we were tooling up for ours. Was there some compromise possible, or should we put SALT on the back burner? Couldn't we leave the submarines for Brezhnev and the President to settle in Moscow? I said that that would make it impossible, because SALT involved so many technical issues that I saw no way these two could settle the issue there. He wondered if we could work out all other issues before. I said that at this moment it was next to impossible for me to predict what position we would take, but it would be very hard for us to change our position. It was one of the few issues in which my recommendation would not be decisive, since the military felt very strongly that submarines had to be included.

Dobrynin said that we had to come to some general understanding, and he outlined three possibilities. One, that we would make an agreement including submarines. Two, that we would make an agreement excluding submarines. Three, that we would make an agreement which excluded submarines but which put submarines as the top item on the agenda of the next agreement or perhaps even made them the subject of a separate agreement, like the one on ABM, in the new phase. I told him I would report this to the President and give him a reaction at the next meeting.

Dobrynin then stressed the need for making more rapid progress and affirmed the extreme interest of the Soviet Union in having a constructive summit. I showed him some of the harsh criticism of the President in the Soviet press. He said, well, newspaper commentators in the Soviet Union do not have the same status as a Presidential report.

We set another meeting for the following Thursday,⁶ and parted.

⁶ March 9.

55. Editorial Note

In a March 7, 1972, conversation with White House Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman, Assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs Ehrlichman, and the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Kissinger, President Nixon noted the difficulties he was having with

Secretary Rogers over Rogers' role at the Moscow summit. In particular, Rogers expected to play a larger role in Moscow than he had during the Beijing visit.

During the course of the conversation, Nixon noted that the Soviet protocol was very different than that of the Chinese. "You can also point out that it's not unusual in the case of totalitarians," he told Kissinger; "it is a totally different game. Rogers came away insulted, he said the Foreign Minister is fifth on their protocol list. But to have sent the Secretary of State to talk to Chou En-lai would not have worked." Nixon added: "But the reason it would not have worked is that they do not consider Secretaries of State to be negotiating people." For example, he noted that Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko had more power than most foreign ministers, but never negotiated directly. Nixon stated: "We can't go through with the meeting if we're going to have the same damn thing with the Russians. We can't go through with that. We need to find a way to deal with it before then." He did not want to have the "same damn thing" with the Soviet summit as had occurred in China. Haldeman suggested that the President inform Rogers that he must handle it the way that the administration wanted it. Ehrlichman added that the Soviets needed to know foreign policy was made in the White House and that the Department of State only played a secondary role. Haldeman added that all Rogers needed to do was "to tie himself to the kite because it's soaring." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, March 7, 1972, 11:41 a.m.–12:31 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 679–8)

That evening, the same participants met with Rogers to discuss summit arrangements. Rogers suggested that, since the principal subjects to be discussed during the Moscow trip would be the Middle East and European security, either Haig or Assistant Secretary Hillenbrand should be sent on an advance trip. The President responded that no advance trip would occur. Haldeman noted that the administration had avoided advance contact with a government other than at the protocol and security levels, and that arrangements would be much tighter in Moscow. Nixon also added that he did not want to stay in a Russian guest house but in the Embassy, on American soil.

Rogers asked that the President "get the word out" that Rogers was planning and supervising the Moscow trip. Of course, Rogers said he would be working closely with Kissinger. Rogers' main concern in this regard was the impression being created in the press that the Department of State was cut out of everything. The President noted that the planning had to be done from the White House. Rogers countered that the logistics would not be done by the White House. Haldeman added that such an announcement would downgrade Rogers rather than building him up. Since Kissinger always stated that he had con-

sulted with the President as well as the Secretary of State on the agenda and backgrounders of similar meetings, the optimal role for Rogers was to be “a principal rather than the guy doing the background work.”

The President noted that the first few days in Moscow would simply “be talk.” Then announcements of agreements would begin occurring daily. Nixon assented that Rogers could make the initial announcements and could brief the press on the daily agreements reached, which would be an appropriate role for him. Rogers noted his concern that the Department of State had to be included in the planning process. Nixon pointed out that having Rogers make the announcements would prove that the Department of State was substantively involved. Haldeman said that this would avoid press reports saying that the Department of State is humiliated, which had been a problem of the Department on the China trip. Rogers believed that the current “flak between the White House and the State Department” was based upon the negative reporting of the press. (*Ibid.*, March 7, 1972, 4:56–6:18 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 679–15)

56. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 9, 1972, 1:15–3:30 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Ambassador Dobrynin

The meeting started on an especially jovial note because it was Dobrynin’s 30th wedding anniversary, and I had sent him and his wife a bottle of champagne to celebrate it. Dobrynin insisted that we drink it jointly. Dobrynin reminisced about how he had met his wife when they were both students at an institute in Moscow that had been moved to Alma-Ata during the German invasion. He said, “You see, we were watching the Chinese even then.” He said that they had been separated for a year during the war while his wife continued her studies

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President’s Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 1]. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. The meeting was held during lunch at the Soviet Embassy. This memorandum of conversation was attached to a March 20 summary memorandum from Kissinger to Nixon, under which he transmitted the texts of both the March 9 and March 10 memoranda of conversation. A notation on the covering memorandum indicates the President saw it.

at Alma-Ata, but had been together ever since. Dobrynin added that what we did not understand was that the Russians were a deeply sentimental people, and that if you did things with them on the basis of friendship, it was always better than doing it from a position of strength. We then went to lunch.

Before I could start my list of subjects, Dobrynin handed me the oral note about bilateral negotiations, attached at Tab A. We reviewed them subject by subject, to insure that we understood exactly what their proposition was in each case.

Trade and Other Technical Bilateral Issues

Discussing trade, Dobrynin said that it would be useful if we could agree on a subject. I told him that I would check with the President and let him know the next day into what channel he should put what answer. I assured him that Butz would go to Moscow, that there was a chance, however, of getting a trade delegation to go, and that we would be prepared to start negotiations on all the remaining subjects along the lines of our previous discussions. This took some time, because there were a number of problems with the meaning of the Soviet note, none of which, however, had any substantive import.²

We then turned to other bilateral issues. Dobrynin handed me a note about a Mr. Jay (Tab B)³ who allegedly was engaged in espionage activities in the Soviet Union but had been permitted to leave the country without Soviet interference. He said no answer was expected.

Middle East

With respect to the Middle East, I told Dobrynin that I would have for him within a week some tentative ideas of how to proceed. He said this would be very useful.

² In a March 10 memorandum to Kissinger entitled "Responses to Dobrynin re bilateral Negotiations," Sonnenfeldt wrote: "I see no reason why you should let yourself get hustled into a trade delegation *until we know precisely what we want to accomplish*. It is clear what the Soviets want—they want to pin us down on Ex-Im facilities, on our going for MFN legislation and on negotiating a 'trade agreement.' But we are not ready for this." (Ibid.) The Export-Import Bank financing and the extension of MFN are detailed in a March 13 memorandum from Flanigan to Kissinger. (Ibid., Box 718, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Vol. XX, March 1972) Flanigan also summarized the economic issues in an undated memorandum entitled "Scenario for U.S.–U.S.S.R. Economic Relations." (Ibid., Box 992, Haig Chronological Files, March 7–15, 1972) Rogers assessed U.S.–Soviet economic relations in a memorandum to Nixon entitled "Next Steps with Respect to U.S.–Soviet Trading Relationships. (March 10; *ibid.*, Box 718, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Vol. XXI)

³ In this undated note, attached as Tab B but not printed, the Soviet Government accused private U.S. citizen Edward Jay of attempting to persuade Soviet citizens to defect to the West. "However, the Soviet side, guided by the interests of improving relations between our countries and, specifically, having in mind President Nixon's forthcoming visit to the U.S.S.R., deemed it possible not to institute criminal proceedings against Jay and let him freely return to the U.S.," the note asserted.

SALT

With respect to SALT, Dobrynin raised again the issue of submarines. He said it was going to be an increasingly tough issue, particularly if we were asking for equivalence. I replied that he must have misunderstood me, because there were a number of modifications: first, as Smith had already hinted to Semyonov, we were probably prepared to shift the cut-off date, which would add a number of submarines to the total; secondly, we had already proposed that they could convert some of their G- and H-class submarines, which would add six more. I then said that, thinking out loud, there was even a possibility of converting a few of their oldest missiles into submarines. He asked me to give him some idea of what total number would be permitted on this basis. I said that the total number I did not know, but I would let him know as soon as possible.

Communiqué

Dobrynin then turned to the issue of the communiqué. He wondered whether the principles that had been agreed to between the Soviet Union and France could serve as a model. I said that I would have to study them again carefully. He asked whether we could submit a draft communiqué to them. I told him that we would also be interested in seeing their draft. Dobrynin replied that if he submitted a draft communiqué it would become a decision by their government and, in that case, any modifications would also require a decision by their government. He thought the better method would be to work from our draft.

I then raised the issue of the conduct of the Moscow meetings. We wanted to separate the meetings between Brezhnev and the President from those of the larger group. Dobrynin said that there was no problem about this in principle. At Glassboro,⁴ for example, Kosygin and Johnson were alone except for an interpreter, while Rusk was occupied with Gromyko. On the other hand, to make this a formal proposal right now would put the Soviet leaders in the difficult position of having to make a formal reply, and this quite frankly would raise some tension within the leadership group. He could assure me that Brezhnev and the President would spend many hours alone together, or with just me and Alexandrov. As for Rogers, he would be kept amply busy by Gromyko and by other members of the Politburo who would be available.

⁴ Reference is to the summit meeting of June 23–25, 1967, between President Lyndon Johnson and Kosygin; see *Foreign Relations, 1964–1968*, vol. XIV, Soviet Union, Documents 217–238.

Vietnam

Dobrynin asked me whether I had any news about the Vietnam situation. I said I did not.

China

Dobrynin then said he had a question to raise on the highest authority. Moscow had been told by Chinese sources that on my October visit I had given them a complete rundown of the “dislocation” of Soviet forces on the Chinese border, as well as of the location of Soviet missile installations. The gravest view would have to be taken of such a matter in Moscow if this were true. I replied that I had had no discussions of a military nature during my October visit, but that in any event we would not get involved in military things. I might have said on one or two occasions that I thought their fears of Soviet strength were exaggerated. Dobrynin wanted to know whether I then gave the correct figures. I said, no, it was always done in a general context.

I followed this up in a telephone call (Tab C)⁵ by explaining the context as one in which the Chinese were afraid of a simultaneous attack by all their neighbors.

Dobrynin remarked that the Soviet leaders were determined to make the Summit meeting a success, and the meeting closed on this note.⁶

⁵ Tab C was not found.

⁶ In a March 8 memorandum to Kissinger entitled “Your Next Meeting with Dobrynin,” Sonnenfeldt advised Kissinger to point out to Dobrynin that while “formal preparations” for the summit, such as scheduling and activities planning, were “lagging,” the “substantive preparations,” such as agreements on bilateral issues, were moving forward and “could well be completed in time for May.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Box 67, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Sonnenfeldt Papers [2 of 2]) In a conversation with Nixon that evening, Kissinger noted that Dobrynin called McCloskey earlier that day regarding trip arrangements. Kissinger, wanting nothing prematurely leaked, directed McCloskey not to return Dobrynin’s call until after Kissinger had talked to him. In agreement, Nixon noted: “It’s the President’s trip, not the Secretary of State’s trip.” Kissinger replied: “Otherwise, they’ll have you in the position that they’ve done it all.” (Ibid., White House Tapes, March 9, 1972, 6:09–6:20 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 681–7)

Tab A

Note From the Soviet Leadership to President Nixon⁷

Moscow, March 9, 1972.

1. We consider as settled the procedure of conducting preparatory work for the meeting, having in mind that exchange of opinion on questions regarding Europe, Middle East, Southeast Asia, limitation of strategic arms and coming to an agreement on the meeting's final documents as well as on other issues of principle will be confined to the confidential channel. Practical matters of bilateral relations will be discussed and worked upon through regular diplomatic channels as well as between appropriate ministries and agencies of both countries.

2. As for the practical issues of bilateral Soviet-American relations, we agree that in the remaining period preceding the meeting concrete agreements should be prepared on the maximum range of those questions.

Trade and Economic Matters

a. We confirm that we agree to receive an American trade delegation in Moscow this March for further concrete discussions of trade and economic matters.⁸ We request at the same time that the American side informs us in advance of the questions, the U.S. delegation would wish to discuss in Moscow, as well as of the level and the composition of the delegation.

b. We confirm that the USSR Ministry for Foreign Trade agrees to receive in Moscow in March–April the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture for negotiating and concluding a long-term agreement on deliveries of feed grain on credit terms as well as of soy beans.⁹

c. We inform that our attitude is positive in principle to the idea of the USSR Foreign Trade Minister visiting the U.S. before the May meeting and of a subsequent visit to the USSR by a new U.S. Secretary of Commerce.

As regards taking a final decision on this matter it would be advisable, in our view, to come to it somewhat later, with due account of progress in trade negotiations in Moscow.

⁷ No classification marking. A handwritten notation on the attachment reads: "Handed to HAK by D on 9 Mar 72."

⁸ Kissinger wrote in the margin: "Trade delegation—Peterson."

⁹ Kissinger wrote in the margin: "Friday."

d. We confirm that we agree to hold negotiations on lend-lease in March–April in Washington.¹⁰

e. We confirm that we are prepared to receive an American delegation for continuing talks on settling the questions of shipping between the USSR and the U.S.¹¹

Questions of Cooperation in Science and Technology

a. We positively regard the idea of creating a joint Soviet-American committee on cooperation in science and technology. Our appropriate agencies will be prepared to conduct concrete discussions in March–April on its composition and functions as well as to work out an appropriate agreement on this matter, which would be signed at the meeting in May. At the same time they will be also prepared to discuss questions concerning protection of environment, including the question of establishing cooperation in this field, within the framework of a general agreement on cooperation in science and technology (which we consider preferable) or by concluding a separate agreement.¹²

b. We confirm that the Soviet side is prepared to continue discussions, in the period remaining before May, of cooperation between the USSR and the U.S. in exploration of outer space, including docking of space ships, having in mind the possibility of formalizing at the summit meeting the agreement reached on this score.

c. As for cooperation in the area of health we proceed from the understanding that as a follow up of the recent exchange of views between the Ministers of Health of the USSR and the U.S., the Soviet-American committee on these questions, which will start its work at the end of March, could prepare an appropriate concrete agreement, that may be signed in May.¹³

d. As for the continuation of the negotiations on preventing incidents at sea we expect that the American side makes a suggestion with regard to a specific date of their resumption.

¹⁰ Kissinger wrote in the margin: "State."

¹¹ Kissinger wrote in the margin: "State."

¹² Kissinger wrote in the margin: "Separate possible."

¹³ Kissinger wrote in the margin: "Check Richardson—Point to agreement."

57. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 10, 1972, 2:30 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Ambassador Dobrynin

The meeting took place so that I could give Dobrynin the answers to his questions of the previous day.²

I told Dobrynin which departments to approach for what problems, explaining that on the President's instructions I had split up the topics among the various departments in order to prevent a State

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 1]. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. The meeting was held in the Map Room of the White House. Attached to a March 20 memorandum from Kissinger to Nixon, transmitting the texts of both the March 9 and March 10 memoranda of conversation. A notation on the covering memorandum indicates the President saw it. According to Kissinger's Record of Schedule for March 10, he met with Dobrynin from 2:50 to 3:30 p.m. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976) An attached note reads: "The Soviet leaders have no objections to make public in the nearest future, for example, on March 17, simultaneously in Moscow and Washington the previously agreed date, May 22, of President Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union. We have in mind to publish a brief announcement on this matter of the following comments: 'About United States President R. Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union. As it was announced in October, 1971 agreement was reached between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the President of the United States R. Nixon to hold a meeting in Moscow in the latter part of May, 1972, at which all major issues would be considered with a view toward further improving the bilateral relations between our countries and enhancing the prospects of world peace. Now the sides have agreed that President Nixon will come to Moscow on an unofficial visit on May 22, 1972.'" A notation on the attached note reads: "Handed to K by D, 3:00 p.m., 3/10/72."

² In a conversation with the President on March 10, Kissinger noted that he would establish the primary agency leads through which the various agreements to be negotiated in Moscow would occur. "I'm going to split the thing up into so many different agencies that no one can claim that they did it all," Kissinger proclaimed. Kissinger noted that the Soviets had encountered similar issues relating to bureaucratic coordination. Kissinger continued: "Funny enough, they have the same problem we have. I told him about private meetings between you and Brezhnev, and he said, it's guaranteed, it will happen, and there'll be many of them, but if they make it a formal thing now there'll be a terrible row between Brezhnev, Kosygin, and Podgorny. So they'd consider it a favor if we didn't make it a formal thing now and just had it as a private understanding. I said sure." Nixon asked, "Is he going to bring him into Rogers?" Kissinger replied, "He said Rogers is going to be so busy. He said, you know Gromyko, he can keep Rogers so busy. And he says he'll run in whichever leader isn't with you. So either Kosygin or Podgorny see him." Nixon then asked, "But he knows the game, doesn't he?" Kissinger replied that he did. Nixon agreed and noted that Dobrynin would "be suave enough to handle the Rogers problem too." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, March 10, 1972, 12:50–1:10 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 682–8)

Department monopoly of negotiations with the Soviet Union. I asked him to take up science with Dr. David,³ but only at the end of the week. I suggested that he give the answer on lend-lease and also shipping negotiations at the State Department; that the answers on agriculture should be given to Beam in Moscow; that he should go to Commerce on the trade matter; and that he should conduct the health discussions with Dr. Egeberg in HEW,⁴ who in turn would be instructed to bring matters to the point of an agreement in time for the Summit.

I then mentioned to Dobrynin that I might go on vacation on March 20th. He said, "On March 20th or April 15?" I said on March 20th. He said, "I thought the meeting had been changed to April 15." I asked which meeting. He said the meeting with the North Vietnamese. I told him that I had not informed him of it because this was a matter on which the North Vietnamese should inform their own allies. However, if this constant postponement of meetings continued, we would break off the channel. Dobrynin said we took the North Vietnamese too seriously, but he hoped things would work out.

I showed Dobrynin a memo written to me by Scali (Tab D)⁵ which raised the same point as he had the day before about the allegation that I had given information to the Chinese. Dobrynin said that his information was that it had occurred last October—not on my first trip in July, as the Scali note maintained. I said either information was incorrect.

Dobrynin handed me a Soviet draft (Tab E)⁶ of the announcement setting the date of the President's visit to Moscow. The Soviet Union suggested the announcement for March 17th. I suggested that March 16th might be more convenient for the President. Dobrynin said he was certain this would be no problem but he asked me to call him.⁷

I then gave Dobrynin the figures for the ceiling on submarines if various options were exercised, and indicated that it might go as high as the middle 50's as against our 41. Dobrynin said he could not understand our eagerness to get an agreement which was so unequal. How would we justify a Soviet preponderance in this to our public? I

³ Dr. Edward E. David, Science Adviser to the President and Director of the Office of Science and Technology.

⁴ Dr. Roger Egeberg, Special Consultant to the President.

⁵ Tab D not found.

⁶ Attached but not printed.

⁷ Kissinger discussed the date for the announcement in separate telephone conversations with Dobrynin on March 8, 8:50 p.m., and with Nixon, March 10, 5:30 p.m. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

said we would have to explain it on the ground that the Soviets could keep a smaller number deployed at any given number of submarines. Dobrynin said, "There must be some angle. What is it?" I said there was no angle, but there was serious concern about submarines. Dobrynin said he would examine the question and let me know.

58. Memorandum From President Nixon to his Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, March 11, 1972.

I believe that the expectations for the Moscow trip are being built up too much. What I am concerned about is not that we will fail to achieve the various goals about which there has been speculation but that when we do make the formal agreements there will be no real news value to them because of their having been discounted by an enormous amount of discussion prior to the Summit.

There are two ways to attack this problem. First, as I have already indicated to you, it is vitally important that no final agreements be entered into until we arrive in Moscow and it is also important that speculation with regard to negotiation of such agreements be limited. I realize that the latter objective is very hard to achieve due to the fact that so many people will be talking to Dobrynin but we should make every possible effort to put a lid on speculation with regard to matters we expect to reach agreement on at the Summit with the Russians.

Another line of attack which should be used to the fullest extent possible is to begin a line of pessimism with regard to what may be accomplished in certain fields. This is particularly important insofar as SALT is concerned. When I see a news story to the effect that we are asking Congress for funds to implement our SALT agreement as if it were an accomplished fact, I realize how difficult it is going to be for us to make the agreement seem like an achievement at the Summit. We know that there would be no possibility of the SALT agreement had we not done the work we have participated in up to this time. On the other hand, there will be an attempt to make it appear that all of this could have been achieved without any Summit whatever, and that all we did was to go to Moscow for a grandstand play to put the final

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, President's Personal Files, Box 3, Memoranda from the President, Memos—March 1972. Eyes Only.

signature on an agreement that was worked out by Gerry Smith, State, etc. The Mideast is another case in point. Of course, we should attempt to see that very little is said about the Mideast as a possible Summit agenda item, but at any event we should indicate wherever the subject is raised that we expect very little at the Summit on that score.

As far as the other items are concerned, probably most of them are too far down the track for us to do much about them. But I think that to the extent you can, through backgrounders, in which you can possibly use Scali rather effectively in those cases where you do not want to involve your own credibility, you should indicate that there are some very serious problems involved in reaching agreement on the major items, that there are road blocks that we may not be able to break, and thereby build a case for having a Summit for the purpose of removing those road blocks.

Again emphasizing the danger I see emerging, our critics who oppose summitry in any event will try to say that everything we finally agree to was all worked out through the usual State Department and other channels and that the Summit was really not necessary except as an election-year spectacular.

With regard to the Summit on another point, I realize that the Russians will have far more plenary sessions than did the Chinese. They have to give a considerable amount of lip service to the whole idea of collective leadership. In view of the fact that Brezhnev, Podgorny, and Kosygin will be on their side I think it is important for us to limit the participants on our side. In other words, if they have those three as well as Gromyko we should have Rogers, yourself and myself as the three on our side, possibly adding Hillenbrand if that becomes necessary. I suppose that Beam poses a problem and it might be that you would have to have him included. Where I think you should draw the line, however, is on the attendance at plenary sessions, except where they are totally formal, by Scali, Ziegler and other press people. The moment we add them on our side they will have to add others on their side and the meetings will become so big that they will be totally useless. There, of course, should be a note taker on our side and I suppose in this instance we would have to have our translator because we should not rely only on theirs, but I want you to make every possible effort to limit the number of people who participate in the plenary sessions. Needless to say, in any session I have with Brezhnev I only want you, our translator and a note taker present on our side. Under no circumstances would Beam or any State Department representative be present.

59. Editorial Note

Over the course of the day on March 13, 1972, Assistant to the President Henry Kissinger and Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin devised the text for the joint announcement of the upcoming summit meeting in Moscow. Starting with the text offered by Dobrynin on March 10 (see footnote 6, Document 57), the announcement evolved into final form. An excerpt from Kissinger's 10:30 a.m. telephone conversation with Dobrynin reads:

"K: What I want to do is to send you the text as we have written it. It uses the phrases from the original announcements and I think all it is making three sentences from one.

"D: There is no change in the substance?

"K: I don't believe there is, but that's why I want you to check it. After you check it, if you have any questions call me." (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

At 3:48 p.m., Kissinger and Dobrynin spoke again:

"K: Did they send over the text to you?

"D: No.

"K: Well, there are a few dead bureaucrats and there will be one more in 15 minutes. It is going to be over in half an hour.

"D: Now they decided to make it at the same hour. What do you propose?

"K: 3 o'clock.

"D: In Moscow it will be 11. You are not going to make it earlier, no?

"K: Well, let me check with the President and I will let you know. If there is a possibility of a Presidential press conference it will be at 3:00. Let me see what we can do.

"D: You will call me today?

"K: In an hour." (Ibid.)

At 4:25, Kissinger called White House Chief of Staff H.R. Haldeman and requested that he get Special Assistant Chapin to make arrangements for the joint announcement with Soviet Embassy official Vorontsov. (Transcript of telephone conversation between Kissinger and Haldeman, March 13, 1972, 4:25 p.m.; *ibid.*)

At 5:55 p.m. on March 13, Kissinger and Dobrynin engaged in further discussion on the announcement.

"D: This English text—first, there is nothing said about the second half of May.

"K: We will put that in. We will just take whatever the communiqué said.

"D: Mine?

"K: Your draft.

"D: No, I don't think so. I have the Russian text.

"K: I don't like that wording either: 'It was agreed that a meeting should take place.'

"D: In October, you remember your text. Simply an agreement was announced that a meeting was held in Moscow.

"K: No, I propose your text, but that agreement was announced that a meeting be held in Moscow between the President—

"D: An agreement was announced that a meeting be—

"K: It was announced that an agreement had been reached on a meeting—

"D: That is better.

"K: That is no problem.

"D: It was announced that agreement has been reached on and then put it this way, in the second half of May or in late May. How would you like it?

"K: In the second half of May.

"D: In the second half of May because otherwise it would not be clear.

"K: And it has now been agreed that President Nixon's visit to Moscow will begin on—

"D: What about October 12?

"K: Let me read it. On October 12, 1971, it was announced that agreement had been reached on a meeting between President Nixon and leaders of the Soviet Union in the second half of May or to take place in the second half of May.

"D: To take place.

"K: It has now been agreed that President Nixon's official visit to Moscow will begin on May 22, 1971, as stated in the October 12 announcement.

"D: Good." (Ibid.)

At 6:10 p.m. on March 13, Kissinger called Nixon to inform him of the progress on the announcement:

"P: Is there any last minute news?

"K: No, things are fairly quiet. I worked out with Dobrynin a text for the announcement for Thursday at 11:30 in the morning.

"P: Good, and we are announcing it just the same as the China one with the delegation, and Mrs. Nixon is going, I presume?

"K: We aren't going to go into the technical end.

"P: Oh fine, leave it out. I just want to be sure we don't add any more.

"K: We might say Mrs. Nixon will accompany you.

"P: We did it in the China one. 'He will be accompanied by Mrs. Nixon and Rogers.'

"K: Let Ziegler answer that in the questions. We have agreed on the text but he can answer that in questions.

"P: Fine. Otherwise things are fairly quiet." (Ibid.)

The final revised text of the announcement, as completed the next day and released at 11:30 a.m. on March 16, reads: "On October 12, 1971, it was announced that agreement had been reached on a meeting between President Nixon and the leaders of the Soviet Union to take place in the second half of May. It has now been agreed that President Nixon's official visit to Moscow will start on May 22, 1972. Mrs. Nixon will accompany the President. As stated in October, President Nixon and the Soviet leaders will review all major issues, with a view toward further improving bilateral relations and enhancing the prospects for world peace." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 9 [Pt. 1]) However, the Soviet Union released their original text of March 10. In a March 16 memorandum to Kissinger, Helmut Sonnenfeldt of the NSC staff commented: "What point is there in negotiating out a specific set of words if the Soviets then blithely proceed to use, in Russian and English, without the slightest change the language they originally proposed? If this is going to be their practice when we negotiate the Moscow communiqué there will be nothing ahead but trouble." (Ibid., Kissinger Office Files, Box 67, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Sonnenfeldt Papers [2 of 2])

60. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to the White House Chief of Staff (Haldeman)¹

Washington, March 15, 1972.

SUBJECT

The President's Visit to the Soviet Union

At Tab B is a memorandum of March 14, 1972 to you from Secretary Rogers. The memorandum informs you that Secretary Rogers has taken personal charge of State Department coordinating efforts with the various relative departments of the government in connection with the President's visit to the Soviet Union. A personal coordinating role by the Secretary could, obviously, pose serious problems with respect to the preparation of substantive matters which have already been set in motion under the provisions of NSSM 143 of December 15, 1971, NSDM 153 of February 17, 1972 and the Joint NSSM and CIEPSM 145 and 20 and the Joint NSDM 151 and CIEPDM 6, dated January 17, 1972 and February 14, 1972 respectively (at Tab C).² I believe it is essential that you move promptly to remind the Secretary that whatever coordinating role he visualizes for himself should be within the framework of the provisions of the NSC directives which have already been promulgated.

At Tab A is a memorandum for your signature to Secretary Rogers which:

—Acknowledges receipt of the Secretary's memorandum and advises that it has been discussed with the President

—Reiterates the requirement that the preparation of bilateral U.S.-Soviet matters preparatory to the Summit be conducted within the framework of the NSC system (Senior Review Group and CIEP) and,

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 992, Haig Chronological Files, March 7–15, 1972. Secret. Drafted by Haig. The memorandum is unsigned. In his March 7 diary entry, Haldeman wrote that Nixon "had me sit in the Rogers meeting this afternoon, and Bill made a pitch for the need to solve the problem of his apparent downgrading and the press coverage thereof. His solution was for the P[resident] to announce that Rogers was in charge of the planning for the Russian trip. The P finessed that, as he should have, and made it pretty clear and directly to Rogers that he wasn't about to be put in charge of the trip." (*The Haldeman Diaries: Multimedia Edition*)

² Attached as Tab C, but not printed, are NSSM 143, "Review of U.S.-Soviet Negotiations," December 15; NSSM 153, "Review of U.S.-Soviet Negotiations," February 17; NSSM 145/CIEPSM 20, "U.S.-Soviet Trading Relationships," January 17; and NSDM 151/CIEPDM 6, "Next Steps with Respect to U.S.-Soviet Trading Relationships," March 15.

—Advises the Secretary that Dwight Chapin has been designated as the point of contact with an appropriate Soviet counterpart for the trip's physical arrangements and agrees to include the State Department representative, Mr. John Thomas, in appropriate forums related thereto.³

Recommendation:

That you:

—Discuss the Secretary's memorandum and my proposed response for your signature with the President.

—Sign and dispatch the response to Secretary Rogers as soon as possible.⁴

³ In a March 21 memorandum for the file, Chapin discussed his meeting that morning with Vorontsov during which they discussed arrangements for the Moscow trip and specifically places where Nixon could visit. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 10) In a March 28 memorandum to Nixon, Rogers discussed a variety of activities that Nixon could undertake while in the Soviet Union. (Ibid., Kissinger Office Files, Box 74, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Moscow Summit 1972 [2 of 2]) In a March 29 memorandum to Kissinger transmitting the Rogers memorandum, Sonnenfeldt noted that "there are several good ideas in this memorandum which are useful for Dwight Chapin to have available." (Ibid.) In a February 29 memorandum to Kissinger, Sonnenfeldt also suggested possible stops for Nixon during his visit to the Soviet Union, including Leningrad, Tblisi, Yerevan, or Askhabad. He also advised on setting up an advance team before and briefings following the trip, and the procedures for drafting a communiqué. (Ibid., Box 67, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Sonnenfeldt Papers [2 of 2]) An additional step preparatory to the summit was the prohibition of reconnaissance flights over parts of and restrictions on flights close to the Soviet Union for the duration of Nixon's visit to the U.S.S.R. (National Security Council, Nixon Intelligence Files, 40 Committee Files, Minutes, Originals, 1972)

⁴ In his diary entry for March 16, Haldeman wrote: "The other problem today was a memo from Bill Rogers to me, saying that he was going to take charge of the Russian trip and start coordinating the Departments, and so on, which had Henry pretty disturbed. And I raised it with the P when he came down from Camp David, or raised it on the phone with him, when he was just chatting with me, and he said I should just level with him on it. That the P's taken many trips, he's always in charge of his own trips, and following that practice, the P will be in personal charge and will not delegate that to anyone. He told me to take a very hard line with Rogers on this. Not back off at all. So I am writing Bill a memo in response to take care of that." (*The Haldeman Diaries: Multimedia Edition*) According to Kissinger's memoirs, Haldeman did sign and transmit the draft memorandum on the orders of the President. (*White House Years*, p. 1128) In his diary entry for March 20, Haldeman wrote: "Rogers discussed with me the question of his memo on Moscow; said he wanted to simply avoid the thought that State can't be avoided because they can't be trusted, but he doesn't think the staff realizes that under the law the State Department has the responsibility, or the Secretary does. Other Departments can't start exploration with other governments without going through the Secretary of State; therefore, he wants to be informed, and he says, 'I'm going to find out all that's possible about whatever one is doing. I'll be god-damned if I'll operate in the dark.' For instance, the Commerce Department's last negotiations with the Soviets—we had to back off because they came in illegally. Said he was sending a memo to the P on this, and we need to get the word out. For example, he's heard the Secretary of Agriculture's going to Moscow, and he thinks he should be in touch with him. So on. Still worrying about his own position rather than how to be of assistance to the P." (*The Haldeman Diaries: Multimedia Edition*)

Tab A

**Draft Memorandum From the White House Chief of Staff
(Haldeman) to Secretary of State Rogers**

Washington, undated.

SUBJECT

The President's Visit to the Soviet Union

I have shown to the President your memorandum to me of March 14th. He is delighted that you are giving personal attention to the preparations for his visit to the Soviet Union. At the same time, he is concerned that preparatory substantive arrangements be conducted consistent with the provisions of NSSM 143 of December 15, 1971, NSDM 153 of February 17, 1972 and the Joint NSSM and CIEPSM 145 and 20 and the Joint NSDM 151 and CIEPDM 6, dated January 17, 1972 and February 14, 1972 respectively, which designate the NSC Senior Review Group and the CIEP as the focal points for coordination of substantive bilateral matters pertaining to the Soviet Summit. Due to the myriad of departmental interests in the substantive issues, it is important that there be no misunderstanding about the coordinating mechanism which should be followed.

With respect to the physical arrangements, the President has designated Dwight Chapin as the point of contact with whomever Ambassador Dobrynin might designate from the Soviet side. You may be sure that Mr. Chapin will include John Thomas in the preparatory forums which are established for implementing the physical arrangements for the trip.

H.R. Haldeman⁵

⁵ The draft copy bears this typed signature.

Tab B

**Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to the
White House Chief of Staff (Haldeman)⁶**

Washington, March 14, 1972.

SUBJECT

President's Visit to the Soviet Union

As we intensify preparations for the President's visit to the Soviet Union, I plan to take personal charge of State Department coordinating efforts with the various relevant departments of the Government. I shall be having a series of meetings this week within the Department of State to review the current situation, after which I intend to call in Ambassador Dobrynin to discuss the various bilateral negotiations presently or potentially under way which might have a bearing on the Summit conference. We may also be meeting with representatives of other agencies who are, or will be conducting discussions with the Soviets during the pre-Summit period, with a view to insuring that their efforts fit into the general framework both as to timing and possible use in connection with the Presidential visit. Marty Hillenbrand, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, will be working closely with me on the substantive side pursuant to Presidential decisions.

As far as planning the physical arrangements for the trip are concerned, our principal representative will be John Thomas. I will appreciate it if as you proceed to make plans for the visit that Mr. Thomas can attend meetings and be kept fully posted.

William P. Rogers

⁶ Confidential.

61. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) and Secretary of State Rogers¹

Washington, March 16, 1972, 9:40 a.m.

R: Hi, Henry.

K: Bill, you called me last night?

R: Last night? No.

K: I got a message that you called last night and you might call again this morning.

R: No, I didn't call you last night. But on this business about the Qs and As today on the Soviet Union trip, I am perfectly prepared to be reasonable about how we state it but I don't want it to appear that we in the State Department are only doing routine things.

K: I agree completely. Bill, I don't care how they state the damn thing. I don't think it is good for either of us to be in charge of it in this way. Did they send you what I suggested they say?

R: No. Well, they sent me something that said the State Department will handle diplomatic matters which will be okayed at the White House.²

K: What do you think we should say?

R: Well, first this is a coordinated effort under the direction of the President; that the diplomatic and substantive matters will be handled the normal way by the State Department with full cooperation of Dr. Kissinger and his staff.

K: Well, let me see if we can phrase something like that and I will check it with Ted³ before we give guidance. I don't think we should do anything that . . .

R: No, and I think it gives us more of a chance to say this is a cooperative effort. The reason China was different was because we didn't have diplomatic relations with them.

K: Well, as far as I'm concerned . . . I want you to know anything I can do to make it appear to be a cooperative effort I will do.

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² See Document 60.

³ Theodore Eliot, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State and Executive Secretary of the Department of State.

R: I think this is important because there has been so much speculation.⁴

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to the Moscow Summit.]

⁴ According to a transcript of a telephone conversation on March 18 at 11:58 a.m., Kissinger requested that Rogers visit Europe and consult with NATO allies prior to the summit. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

62. Memorandum of Conversation¹

Washington, March 17, 1972, 1 p.m.

PARTICIPANTS

The President (at beginning)
Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy F. Dobrynin
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

The Summit

The President joined us at the beginning of the meeting. The President made two points: he said he was going to Moscow in order to do serious business. There were some places to go for drinks and toasts, and there were other places to do business. Moscow was the place where he wanted to do business.²

Secondly, the President wanted to make sure Dobrynin understood the arrangements for preparing the visit. Kissinger was in complete charge of the summit. We would parcel out specific assignments to specific individuals in the bureaucracy, but this would be done at Kissinger's initiative and Dobrynin should take his guidance from me. He hoped that Dobrynin would cooperate in this effort. Dobrynin said

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 10. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. The meeting was held in the Map Room at the White House. A notation on the memorandum indicates the President saw it. Kissinger sent a March 28 summary memorandum of this meeting to Nixon. (Ibid.) Kissinger's Record of Schedule gives the time of the meeting from 1:10 to 3:10 p.m. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976)

² In his memoirs Kissinger noted that "on March 17 Nixon dropped in on one of my meetings with Dobrynin and told him that I was to supervise all major summit preparations. Technical negotiations on economic relations or scientific or cultural exchanges were turned over to the Cabinet departments, with the State Department playing the lead role, but the key policy issues were to be handled in the channel." (*White House Years*, p. 1128)

that he understood that the big issues such as South Asia, Southeast Asia, Middle East, and SALT would be handled in the meetings with me and that others might go to the bureaucracy. The President said that was correct, but he should take the general instructions from me.

Dobrynin then said, “Our friend Henry is very modest. Is he or is he not coming to Moscow?” The President replied that a visit was impossible before the summit. One, I had gone to Peking because there was no Chinese Dobrynin in Washington, and two, it would break too much china in our bureaucracy. However, he would be glad to have me go to Moscow *after* the summit. Dobrynin said this could be settled either at the summit or shortly after.

At this point, the President left. Dobrynin and I continued the conversation.

I told Dobrynin that I had a complaint about the March 16 joint announcement³ of the date of the President’s visit. I showed him the text which I thought we had agreed upon and the text TASS published (attached at Tab A).⁴ I said I simply did not understand Soviet procedures. Here I had checked every word with him, giving him four different drafts, and finally when the announcement was published it turned out to be exactly what the Soviets had proposed to begin with. It corresponded in no way to the text we had been discussing. This was all the more remarkable because there were no disagreements as to substance. Was it really worth undermining confidence in this manner? Dobrynin replied that if there was any fault, it was entirely his. He had thought that the Soviet text was generally acceptable and that we had asked for an alternative formulation only to improve the English. He had checked our text for its consistency with the Russian, not to produce an identical text. I said I hoped that we would once agree on a joint text; we have made four unsuccessful attempts. That would, of course, affect our estimate of how we could cooperate on the communiqué. We could not possibly afford two different versions. Dobrynin agreed.

Trade

We then turned to substantive matters. Dobrynin said that the trade situation seemed to be in hand. After his conversation with Peterson,⁵ he had come to the view that it might be better for Patolichev to come over here in April. He did not see much sense in having second-level people conduct negotiations that were better conducted at a higher level. I told him this was, of course, agreeable to us.

³ See Document 59.

⁴ Attached but not printed.

⁵ Peterson reported on his March 16 discussion with Dobrynin in a March 17 memorandum to Kissinger and Flanigan. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President’s Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 10) In a March 13 memorandum to Kissinger entitled “Soviet Economic Negotiating Strategy—Some

The Middle East

He then asked, "What about the major items? Let's talk about the Middle East. You told me you would have some proposition to make." I said that the first question that I wanted to raise was: could they give me some expression of how they propose to inform the Egyptians if some agreement were reached between the President and Brezhnev? It seemed to me extremely dangerous to inform the Egyptians at all since they were bound to be penetrated by the Israelis. For us it was a matter of the gravest importance. Dobrynin grew somewhat restless. He said delivering the Egyptians was their problem and they could not be accountable on that. I said that was not the issue; the issue was whether the process of notification would create substantive difficulties that would affect our situation and the possibility of carrying through with any understanding that might be reached. For example, I said,⁶ the interim agreement we were discussing was worse than what Bergus had offered them in the bilateral discussions. If they were going to be asked by the Soviets to accept a worse interim agreement, there had to be some argument that would make this plausible. Dobrynin again said that I seem to be producing one red herring after another to avoid facing concrete issues. I said this was not the case, and I insisted that they produce some expression from Moscow of how they would deal with the implementation of any agreement.

Turning to the substance of the settlement, Dobrynin asked whether I had formulated any ideas. I told him that it seemed to me that the irreducible Israeli position was for the airfield just east of Eilat, control over Sharm el Sheikh, and a land connection with Sharm el Sheikh. This perhaps could be wrapped up in some riparian arrangement of the states along the Gulf of Aqaba, which perhaps might provide a fig leaf for Israeli presence in Sharm el Sheikh. (Attached at Tab B is a memorandum explaining this.)⁷

Dobrynin asked my view of demilitarization. I said in my view demilitarization would have to take place at least to the western edge of the passes. Dobrynin said that in effect I was giving him the Israeli position. I said that if he talked to the Israeli Ambassador, he would not get that idea; this would be next to impossible to sell to the Israelis.

Preliminary Thoughts," Peterson offered the following caution: "If major asymmetry is likely, and I have detailed projections through the end of this decade to validate it, we could find ourselves in a kind of 'reverse-linkage' situation. The Russians, knowing our vulnerability, could then threaten us with non-payment and perhaps turn our generosity into both their short-term economic and longer-term political advantage." (Ibid., Box 992, Haig Chronological Files, March 7–15, 1972)

⁶ Donald Bergus, principal officer, U.S. Interests Section, Cairo.

⁷ Not attached.

What I was trying to do was to get a position which the Israelis might accept with some considerable pressure but short of actions that would lead them to conclude that they were better off going to war. Dobrynin said that in effect we were returning to the old position in which all the sacrifices had to be made in Egypt. I said that the pity was that Dobrynin could never seem to understand that these were negotiating arguments that we had already heard in New York and Washington. If he was talking to me, he should face the substance of the problem, and the substance was that we were prepared to use our good offices with the Israelis but only within a framework that we thought would not drive them to acts of total desperation.

Dobrynin asked why the demilitarized zone had to be entirely on the Egyptian side. I said it was because equivalent demilitarized zones would drive the Israelis back to Jerusalem. Dobrynin asked whether we would consider proportional demilitarized zones. I said it seemed to me extremely improbable, but if he wanted to make a proposal this was of course open to him.

Dobrynin indicated that he did not think we were making much progress. He said the difficulty was that we did not take the Soviet proposals sufficiently seriously. The Soviet Union had offered to withdraw all its forces from Egypt, except a number roughly equivalent to what we had in Iran, not to establish bases elsewhere, and to accept limitations on its arms shipments. This responded exactly to what we had said publicly in July 1969 we wanted. Now we were haggling about a few miles of territory.

I responded that Dobrynin always had the great ability to present his position in the form of enormous concessions, without ever looking at what we were doing on our side. For example, the Soviet proposal was a way for the Soviets of extricating themselves from a difficult situation. Their client could not win a war with the Israelis. Therefore, a continuation of the situation would lead to one of two situations: either a conviction on the part of the Arabs that their alliance with the Soviet Union was not adequate to produce a settlement, or a war by the Egyptians which would face the Soviet Union with a decision of military support and a risk out of proportion to anything that could be achieved.

Dobrynin answered that this was partially true, but there was a third possibility that the Soviet Union had to consider. The Soviet Union was now at a watershed; its next move would be a considerable increase of its military presence in Egypt and other Arab states. He could assure me they were deluged with offers, for example, to provide air protection to other Arab countries. The Soviet Union had requests for a massive influx of arms which then could be given with the argument that the Soviet Union would stay there until the local people were in a position to defeat the Israelis militarily. [Note: This seems confirmed by

Israeli intelligence.]⁸ Also the Soviet Union was well aware of the fact that its proposal really opened up the field for us to compete with them much more effectively in the Arab world than is now the case. In short, it was a major policy act by the Soviet Union, and if we did not pick it up, the consequences might be quite serious. However, he would transmit my suggestions to Moscow and he would give me their reaction.

SALT

We then turned to SALT. Dobrynin asked how serious we were about SLBMs. I repeated once more that we were extremely serious, and that indeed I doubted that an agreement was possible that did not include SLBMs. Dobrynin said he would transmit this to Moscow. He asked me for our ABM position. I hinted at movement in the direction of two-for-two, but put it in form of thinking out loud with no definite prospect of a final decision.⁹

Communiqué

At the end of the meeting I handed him a draft of an agreed statement of principles and outline of the joint communiqué (attached at Tab C).¹⁰ Dobrynin expressed great appreciation and indicated that it was a step forward to have something to work on. We then discussed the dates for further meetings, and settled on March 30.

⁸ Brackets in the source text.

⁹ Following extensive discussion at the Verification Panel meeting of March 8, Kissinger noted that on the ABM issue: "There are two basic decisions: 1) whether to grant the Soviets any ICBM defense, and 2) whether we should make any modification in our proposal. If the President decides these two issues, we can make a technical decision on the other aspects." As to "the question of inclusion of SLBMs," Kissinger continued, "There are two issues: 1) whether or not they *must* be included; we are all agreed that we want them included if we can get them, but the question is how essential is it that they be included; and 2) what modifications could we make in our proposal that would make their inclusion more probable?" Kissinger later added: "I have a horror of the President's getting into technical details in Moscow." (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-107, Verification Panel Minutes, Originals) At the NSC meeting on March 17, Nixon noted: "We don't have to have an agreement because we are going to Moscow. We do it in the context of the national interest—they are moving in the arms race and we are not. We are beginning on both sides to halt the escalation in a race that neither side can be allowed to win. We can't let them go to massive superiority—but its more difficult for us to match them." (Memorandum for the record, March 17; *ibid.*, Box H-110, NSC Minutes, Originals)

¹⁰ Tab C was attached but is not printed. In a March 16 memorandum to Kissinger, Sonnenfeldt described the draft joint communiqué: "You will note that this draft finesses who the President will meet and in what circumstances; it also leaves open what bilateral negotiations will be completed; it keeps the economic part vague; it merely lists a section on SALT without any text." (*Ibid.*, Kissinger Office Files, Box 67, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Sonnenfeldt Papers [2 of 2]) In discussing SALT issues during a telephone discussion with Dobrynin, March 18, Kissinger stated: "We can do them like we did some other things. Also we want to leave something open to be settled at the summit. You and I can agree but we should leave something to be settled at Helsinki." (Transcript of telephone conversation between Kissinger and Dobrynin, March 18, 10:40 a.m.; Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File)

63. Editorial Note

On March 18, 1972, President Nixon met with his Assistant for National Security Affairs Henry Kissinger to discuss issues relating to the upcoming summit in Moscow. Nixon noted the importance of the “press needing to see that there’s something to go to the summit for.” Kissinger noted that “having the summit put a deadline on these negotiations that could have dragged on for years” and thus in and of itself brought about a successful conclusion to the variety of agreements that would come out of the Moscow meetings.

Nixon stated his desire to keep Secretary of State William Rogers from “end-running” the administration during the summit. Kissinger noted that Rogers would handle “subsidiary” negotiations. Nixon also expressed that there was no reason for private talks between Rogers and Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev. Kissinger noted that the Soviet Government had agreed “informally” to avoid such interchanges. Nixon noted that he would send Rogers over to Europe for meetings on regional security prior to the Moscow summit “so nothing gets screwed up.” Kissinger recommended dispatching Rogers to Europe following his own secret trip to Moscow in late April. At that time Rogers could discuss with the Europeans the whole range of the summit. Nixon added that it was “a good move to get him in play but not in play too”; additionally, such a trip involved the Europeans in summit preparations. Nixon suggested that Kissinger call Rogers and discuss the issue as “it might make him feel better.” Kissinger believed that it was a good idea and certainly would help out his relations with Rogers. Nixon said to tell Rogers that they did not want to consult with him beforehand as his trip to Europe would be a very useful and effective exercise. The trip was set for the end of April.

A discussion of various issues that would be faced during the summit ensued. Nixon advised not getting the SALT issues too pinned down. On the Middle East, Kissinger recommended avoiding it in conversations with the Soviets and instead concentrating on it after re-election, when the administration could trade a restoration of the pre-1967 boundaries in exchange for a withdrawal of Soviet forces from the region. The President believed that getting the Soviets out would be “a damn good deal for just a few hunks of desert.” If all else failed, Nixon noted, then the issue could then “be turned back to Rogers.” On Vietnam, Kissinger argued for the launching of offensive military action now so that they could “get it over with” prior to a summit. Even if the North Vietnamese were not amenable in the near future to a peace agreement, “it would be much tougher for them after the election than before,” Nixon surmised. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Tapes, March 18, 1972, 11:07–11:52 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 688–4)

64. Memorandum From President Nixon to White House Chief of Staff (Haldeman)¹

Washington, March 20, 1972.

On Saturday afternoon, just before he left for Acapulco, I discussed with Henry an idea I had had the night before that Bill Rogers should go to Europe to consult with the major European leaders prior to our Moscow trip.² Henry thought it was a very good idea and at my suggestion called Bill and Bill, according to Henry, jumped at the idea and wants to go forward on it.

The problem we have to work around is the date of Henry's trip to Europe, which will take place sometime in the latter part of April unless some plans change. In any event, the best time for Rogers to go would be the first two weeks of May. From the first of May on this would mean we could start the build-up of the Moscow trip and it would allow him time to get back here four or five days before we took off for Moscow.

I want you to discuss the matter with Haig—I see no need to talk with Henry further about it because he has already raised the subject with Rogers. I just don't want Rogers to get frozen in on dates that will be unacceptable. And then I think you should talk to Bill along the following lines. Tell him that the first two weeks of May would be better from our standpoint and that April is a month that I will be making a considerable amount of news on the domestic front; that from the first of May on we want to start the build-up for the Moscow trip. Second, I think it is important in terms of giving his trip the proper build-up, that it not be leaked out by State, but that it be announced from the White House. However, it is up to him, but in this instance his controlling the leaks will be very much to his advantage. If this appears simply as a State Department trip it will not have near the impact it will if it appears to be the Secretary of State going abroad at the request of the President to consult not just with foreign ministers but with the heads of government of our major European allies.

Along the same lines, after the Moscow trip Bill, as you know, is going to NATO. There is the question of whether or not he might be able to stop over for a day in Stockholm at the Environmental Conference. I think you could discuss this with him to see whether he could

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, President's Personal Files, Box 3, Memoranda from the President, Memos–March 1972. No classification marking. The text of the memorandum was dictated by Nixon.

² See Document 63.

work it into his schedule. It is probably a very good PR device for the Administration to have that kind of ranking representative as the head of our delegation. Also, it avoids the problem within the Administration where there is a considerable battle going on as to who will be the head of the delegation. Incidentally, I was talking to Elliot Richardson briefly at the church services and he indicated that he would probably rather go to Japan than to Stockholm. I think this is a good idea because more attention being paid to Japan probably is in our interest, apart from the fact that it will avoid some of the rivalry that will inevitably be produced if too many VIPs go to the Stockholm meeting. Be sure that Bill knows, as far as the Environmental Conference is concerned, however, that it is his choice. If he prefers not to go we then have to put another Cabinet officer in charge of the delegation. It would give him excellent speech material when he returns to add to the speech material that he would have on China and also on Moscow.

65. Editorial Note

In a March 20, 1972, speech before the Soviet Trade Union Congress, General Secretary Brezhnev reviewed the overall foreign policy of the Soviet Union and offered a wide-ranging assessment of current issues that Soviet policymakers faced. Among U.S. Government circles, the speech was viewed as having cast a positive light upon the impending Moscow summit. In Intelligence Note RESN-35, March 20, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research noted that Brezhnev's "concluding endorsement of the upcoming summit emerges as an endorsement of a calculated policy step, taken without illusion and without weakness, in the interest of a higher good." (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL 1 USSR) In a March 20 information memorandum from Executive Secretary of the Department of State Theodore Eliot to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Henry Kissinger, the Department of State noted:

"Brezhnev expressed a positive view of the President's forthcoming trip to Moscow. The overall message is that the Soviet Union has digested the Peking trip and is still approaching the Moscow summit, as Brezhnev put it, from 'businesslike, realistic positions.' He made a positive statement about SALT, and went on to hope for other 'fields of cooperation' to 'give Soviet-American relations a more stable nature.' This seems to us a Soviet response to the President's and your own recent foreign-policy messages to Congress, and expresses a cautious Soviet hope—and need—for specific agreements before and during the Moscow summit." (Ibid.)

The Department of State also transmitted an additional assessment of the Brezhnev speech in telegram 50559 to the U.S. Delegation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Embassies in Germany, the Soviet Union, France, and Britain, March 24. (Ibid.)

In a March 21 memorandum to President Nixon, Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs Haig placed the speech in a slightly different context:

"The speech is fairly good evidence that despite many concerns of the past several months the Soviets intend to at least go through the summit meeting in Moscow before considering any major changes. Brezhnev was, in effect, calming the waters, and denying suggestions of a crisis on Soviet policy, while saying that if the German treaty failed or Chinese problems got worse, it was not the fault of his policies. At the same time, this speech is some confirmation that pressures may be growing on Brezhnev to vindicate himself, and his first reaction is to offer some concessions, rather than turn to a much tougher line." (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 718, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Vol. XX, March 1972)

In a March 2 memorandum entitled "Brezhnev and Soviet Foreign Policy" from National Security Council staff members Helmut Sonnenfeldt and William Hyland to Kissinger, which both Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Alexander Haig and Kissinger agreed was an "excellent analysis," the two National Security Council staff members concluded:

"Summing up, one can see evidence that Brezhnev policies are in some jeopardy. He is vulnerable to a major setback in Germany (and so are we) and he has already suffered a reversal in China. He is subject to the more general critique that as Khrushchev, he has mortgaged too much of the U.S.S.R.'s freedom of action to the good will or policies of opponents.

"More speculatively, Brezhnev might be in some trouble because of developments in the U.S. and relations with Washington. Critics could point to the Indo-Pak crisis, Chinese-American 'collusion,' and perhaps Soviet yielding to American pressure. More recently, they could point to the decision on ULMS as pressure to make an unfavorable SALT agreement, and they could use the Foreign Policy Report as evidence that Brezhnev misjudged the alignment of forces in the U.S. Such an attack, of course, would be more serious if Brezhnev had in fact argued earlier that he could do business with the U.S. and the Soviet's power position was such that the U.S.S.R. could do so from a position of strength. (He came close to such an argument last June in a speech.)

"This is not to say that he is in any real danger of losing his position or under the kind of serious attack that would force him into positions he firmly opposed. Indeed, despite the criticisms that may have been leveled at him, the main lines of his policy still seem intact. It will be after the next phase, centering around the summit, that his course could become open to major change.

"In short, as he moves toward the summit meeting with the President, Brezhnev has lost some of his flexibility but also some of his leverage over us. At bottom, he needs a successful summit, at least as much as we do, and perhaps a shade more." (Ibid.)

66. Editorial Note

On March 21, 1972, from 3:03 to 4:06 p.m., President Nixon met with the General Advisory Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament, chaired by John J. McCloy, to discuss SALT and the summit. (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Central Files, President's Daily Diary)

According to the memorandum of conversation, the President told the Committee:

"In two months he would be on his way to Moscow. There may be a deal then or possibly before—one could not be sure. After the Peking trip there had been many questions about who won or lost. The agreements reached in Peking actually were largely non-substantive and both sides won; each wanted agreement. But with the Soviets an agreement will be very substantive and many things were going on with the Soviets, perhaps because of China. Because agreements will be substantive, there will be real questions about who won or lost. Noting that he had listened with great care to the Defense Department and given it perhaps more time at the NSC than the others, the President said the problem will be with the defense minded people in the Congress and in the country. The arms control people will support anything, but the defense minded people will ask; would we get taken? Are we inhibited while the Soviets can move ahead of us? Therefore, we will need support for the agreement that we may reach, support, if the members of the Committee agree, for the point that the agreement is not detrimental to the security of the United States. In addition, the President went on, our Allies will wonder whether we had now become inferior. He had just been talking to the Turkish Prime Minister. The Turks felt surrounded and saw us a long way off. If there were a debate in the United States in which many said that we were inferior, we would have serious international problems. The President continued that the issue was not war; it involves how two major powers conduct foreign policy. It is true that the Soviets were still aggressive and that the Chinese continue to support revolution, but as regards SALT we must seize the present moment which is perhaps the last moment. (The President interjected that he was perhaps more confident about including SLBMs than some others.)

"In 1962, at the time of the Cuban missile crisis, it had been 'no contest,' because we had a ten to one superiority. But it is not that way now. The possibility of our going into a massive arms build-up is no longer what it was. It might be possible to frighten the US people into doing something but time is running out. The question is: can we seize this moment with both sides recognizing that neither will allow the other to get ahead? With the Soviets this is a credible point; but with us it is getting less credible. In this room we know—and Soviet intelligence knows—that we have weaknesses.

"Why, the President went on to ask, would the Soviets make a deal then? The reasons were perhaps temporary. The arms race is burdensome, the Soviet economy has been flat, their neighbor to the East could be a big problem in 20 years, so that may be a good opportunity to deal with the US. The Soviets may also hope to break up NATO, for example, by coupling SALT with a European Security Conference. And the Soviets may hope that an agreement might help them keep Eastern Europe under control. Soviet reasons were obviously different from ours. Publicly, we say with them: let us curb the arms race and prevent nuclear war. But this is not the real Soviet reason so—we had better make as hard-headed a deal as we can. There may be no other opportunity.

"The President continued that the present SALT negotiations dealt only with the tip of the iceberg. There would be an ABM treaty and an understanding of offensive weapons, but after that would come reductions. And this was the second area where the President would like to look for help from the Committee.

"In conclusion the President reiterated that we needed the Committee's help with the hawks. And secondly, we need suggestions where we go after Moscow over the next four or five years if the United States and the Soviet Union are to make further progress in the strategic arms area." (Memorandum for the President's Files from Alexander Haig, April 7; *ibid.*, White House Special Files, President's Office Files, Box 88, Memoranda for the President, Beginning March 19 [1972])

Later the afternoon of March 21 from 5:10 to 5:47 p.m. Nixon met with Ambassador Gerard Smith and Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs Haig to discuss the strategic arms control process. An excerpt from this meeting reads:

"The President then asked whether or not the Soviets underestimated our domestic environment, and Ambassador Smith replied that he thought they did.

"The President next asked whether or not Ambassador Smith believed the Soviets really wished to reach an agreement. Ambassador Smith answered that he was convinced they did and that they hoped to complete the new round by May 1st. This, he stated, was Semenov's view. The time was short, therefore, and decisions would have to be made very quickly as the new round got underway.

"The President commented that it was evident that in the Ambassador's view the Soviets believed they must have a deal. Ambassador Smith replied that the Soviets believed the U.S. side needed to deal more than it did, but at the same time they also felt the need for an agreement. The President commented that under this concept we should keep the hardsite option on the table. It tended to worry the Soviets. Ambassador Smith agreed and said that he would do so.

“The President asked what former Ambassador Thompson thought about this issue. Ambassador Smith stated that he felt Ambassador Thompson believed that a SALT agreement, with or without SLBM restraints, would be very worthwhile. It was obvious that the left would say the agreement did not go far enough if submarines were not included. The President remarked that the left was not the problem in a political sense.

“Ambassador Smith then stated that he now believed it might be wise not to have the final agreement until the Summit, at which time the President would be ready to sign. If the agreement surfaced before the Summit, then it would only be subjected to knitticking by opponents. Thus, the best strategy might be to hold off on any final agreement until the President personally signed it in Moscow. The President commented that it was obvious there would be some remaining problems to be solved at the Summit and that at that level it would be easier for the President and the Soviet Leadership to iron these problems out. For this reason, it might be necessary to play a few games at Helsinki.

“Ambassador Smith stated that among the issues that could serve to hold up final agreement would be the duration of the agreement and the withdrawal issue. The President commented that it would not have to be settled at the moment but that Ambassador Smith should manage this on his own without bringing the entire Delegation in. Secondly, there would be the problem of who would participate in the signing. Thought should be given to whether or not the whole U.S. Delegation should be in Moscow. Ambassador Smith said that this might be a problem and the Delegation certainly would understand if they were not invited. On the other hand, Paul Nitze could be a problem.

“The President then informed the Ambassador that the SALT Decision Memorandum would soon be released, and it would be necessary for Ambassador Smith to stay in closest touch in the days and weeks ahead. Certainly, the submarine issue was one of the toughest problems. Ambassador Smith stated that he noted some shift in Admiral Moorer’s position on this.” (Memorandum for the President’s Files from Alexander Haig, March 21; *ibid.*)

In National Security Decision Memoranda (NSDM) 158, March 23, President Nixon decided that the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) delegation initially would concentrate upon reaching an agreement on offensive weapon systems with a final decision on the nature of antiballistic missile (ABM) systems “heavily influenced by the scope of the Interim Agreement.” Also, the delegation would make the effort to include limitations on submarine-launched weapons in the Interim Agreement. Nixon instructed the SALT delegation to prepare to dis-

cuss alternate numbers of ABM systems if the Soviets were willing to include these limitations. Additionally, the NSDM laid out technical details relating to the freezing of further construction of intercontinental ballistic missile launchers and limitations on overall numbers. The NSDM also contained the following instructions to Smith:

“The Chairman of the Delegation should, at a time which he deems appropriate, make a statement along the lines that: If the U.S.S.R. were to undertake a concerted program which substantially increased the threat to the survivability of our strategic retaliatory forces, the U.S. would consider this to jeopardize our supreme interests. Consequently, this could be a basis for withdrawal from the ABM treaty.” (Ibid., NSC Files, NSC Institutional Files (H-Files), Box H-232 NSDM 158)

67. Memorandum From Secretary of State Rogers to President Nixon¹

Washington, March 22, 1972.

SUBJECT

Status of Bilateral U.S.-Soviet Issues

Ambassador Dobrynin came in to see me today to review the status of various bilateral issues we have under negotiation or discussion with the Soviets in preparation for your visit. The state of play on each can be summarized as follows.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 10. Secret. The notation “Action: Sonnenfeldt” appears on the memorandum. Rogers also sent a summary of his discussion with Dobrynin in telegram 49839 to Moscow, March 23. (Ibid.) An attached covering note indicates that Haig transmitted the telegram to Kissinger via backchannel message WH21106, March 23. In a March 16 memorandum to Nixon, Rogers wrote: “I intend to hold one of the regular meetings with Ambassador Dobrynin on Monday in preparation for your visit to Moscow.” (Ibid.) In a March 18 memorandum to Nixon, Kissinger wrote: “There is no indication of what the Secretary plans to take up. I believe Dobrynin understands what topics are to be pursued in what channel.” (Ibid.) An attached note from Special Assistant Bruce Kehrli to Kissinger, March 29, reads: “The attached was covered with the President verbally by HRH [Haldeman].” Hillenbrand sent a March 17 briefing memorandum to Rogers in preparation for his meeting with Dobrynin. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR) Hillenbrand had met with Dobrynin on March 14 and covered the same issues. His report appeared in an undated memorandum from Rogers to the President. (Ibid.) It was also transmitted in telegram 49710 to Moscow, March 23. (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 10)

Lend-Lease Talks. The Soviets have agreed to send a delegation to Washington to negotiate a settlement of their outstanding lend-lease debt. I proposed to Dobrynin that the talks begin April 7.²

Feed Grain Delegation. The Soviets have agreed to receive a delegation to discuss credit sales of feed grains. I told Dobrynin that you had asked Secretary Butz to participate in the talks on grain sales.

Maritime Talks. I informed Dobrynin that our negotiators are prepared to go to Moscow for a second round of talks on outstanding maritime issues, but we are still waiting for a clarification of the Soviet position regarding port entry for non-commercial vessels. (Agreement was impossible during the first round because the Soviet delegation was not empowered to negotiate on this basis.) Dobrynin said that a reply would be forthcoming, but it might take a week or more since it would require Politburo approval.³

Space Cooperation. Technical talks on a joint space-docking mission will resume in Houston March 27 and we have proposed that a NASA team go to Moscow April 3 to work out the broader aspects of an agreement. Dobrynin indicated that this is acceptable in principle, and that his government expects an agreement to be reached.

Trade Delegation. I asked Dobrynin to clarify a suggestion he made earlier that we send a delegation to Moscow for another round of trade talks. He said that the Soviets have in mind further talks to prepare the ground for possible political decisions at the summit. Topics they would like to pursue include MFN tariff treatment, credits, trade offices, joint development projects and a joint committee on science and technology. No commitment was made to Dobrynin to talk on any of these subjects and none will be until we receive a directive from you.⁴

² In a March 25 memorandum to Kissinger and Flanigan, Peterson strongly objected to the Department of State proposal of \$500 million at 2 percent interest over 30 years to settle the lend-lease debt owed by the Soviet Union and proposed several alternative terms. (Ibid., Box 718, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Vol. XX, March 1972)

³ In a March 21 memorandum to Hillenbrand, Spiers noted that the understanding on preventing incidents at sea previously reached in discussions in Moscow could not be finalized due to the lack of definitive provisions on aircraft overflight of ships and air-to-air incidents. (Ibid., RG 59, Central Files 1970–73, POL US–USSR) In a March 22 memorandum to Nixon, Rogers expressed his concern that the guidelines for the incidents at sea talks as specified in NSDM 150 would not provide “sufficient flexibility” to allow for an acceptable agreement and would likely result in an impasse during the second round of these talks. (Ibid., POL 33–6 US–USSR)

⁴ In a March 22 memorandum to Secretary of Labor James Hodgson and Flanigan, Peterson outlined the “complex inter-relationships” between domestic labor issues, Soviet trade, and “possible side effects on the Soviet Summit meeting.” (Ibid., Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President’s Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 10)

Other Agreements. Prospects appear good for an agreement on health cooperation. HEW plans to have further discussions with the Soviet Ministry of Health later this month. Mr. Train⁵ will give Dobrynin a preliminary draft tomorrow to be used as the basis of discussion for an agreement on cooperation in the field of environment. We will also be entering a second round of talks on preventing incidents at sea, probably in April.

Removing Irritants. I mentioned to Dobrynin three areas where irritants in our relations might be removed, thereby improving the atmosphere for your visit. I mentioned the possibility of reduction of travel restrictions, and the cessation of jamming the Voice of America. Finally, I told him that Soviet action to allow persons in the Soviet Union to join their families here would be a favorable step.

SALT. After our review of these bilateral issues, Dobrynin asked how we view the prospects for a SALT agreement. I told him that we thought progress had been made but I stressed the importance we attach to an offensive weapons freeze which would include SLBM's.⁶

William P. Rogers

⁵ Russell Train, Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality.

⁶ At a news conference in the Oval Office of the White House, March 24, Nixon remarked: "The Moscow trip, at the present time, will be very different from the P.R.C. trip in the sense that it will be primarily devoted to a number of substantive issues of very great importance. One of them may be SALT, if SALT is not completed before Moscow. It does not appear now likely that they can complete SALT before Moscow, because in my conversations with Ambassador Smith before he left, I find that while we are agreed in principle on the limitation of offensive and defensive weapons, that we are still very far apart on some fundamental issues—well, for example, whether or not SLBMs should be included, matters of that sort. Mr. Smith went back to the meetings, this time in Helsinki, with very full instructions from me, both written and oral, to do everything he could to attempt to narrow those differences. I believe that there is a good chance at this point, particularly in view of Mr. Brezhnev's quite constructive remarks in his speech the other day, that we may reach an agreement on SALT in Moscow on defensive and offensive limitations, and also agreements in a number of other areas. This is our goal, and I would say that at this time the prospects for the success of this summit trip are very good." (*Public Papers: Nixon, 1972*, p. 498)

68. Memorandum From President Nixon to his Chief of Staff (Haldeman)¹

Washington, March 22, 1972.

I want you to have a frank talk with Haig with regard to the Polish invitation. Assuming for the moment that the invitation is a trap to get us involved in the German treaty ratification process, I think we should examine it to see if we can avoid the trap and still get the benefit. There is very little question in my mind that a visit to Poland, from the standpoint of its effect in the United States, would be an enormous plus. It would have more effect than all of our other visits put together from a strict political standpoint. This is something that neither Haig nor Henry understand and that they cannot be expected to consider. Take a hard look at it in any event and see what we can work out.

On the other hand, I do not want to discuss this matter with Henry. You discuss it with him and then give me a recommendation.²

On the same subject, I believe that a brief stop in Istanbul might be a good idea also as we return from Russia. This would mean going to Iran first without making that stop more than a day and then a stop at Istanbul which need not be overnight. Going to Istanbul would not require a state visit kind of reception and would avoid the problem with other NATO countries. Also, an argument can be made on the point that Turkey is the only NATO country with a border on the Soviet Union, and that we have just received a visit from the Turkish Prime Minister and are returning it in an informal way. The Prime Minister came back to the subject several times saying that it would give enormous psychological lift to the Turks if we would just put down for a few hours at Istanbul on our way back to the States.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, White House Special Files, President's Personal Files, Box 3, Memoranda from the President, Memos–March 1972. No classification marking. This memorandum was transcribed from a dictation by Nixon. Haldeman and Nixon discussed this issue in a conversation on the morning of March 21. "Maybe the Soviets are playing a game," Nixon conjectured. "Add Poland on given that it's a good thing to do on the domestic level." But he did question Haig's assertion that there was a strong foreign policy reason for taking the side trip. (Ibid., White House Tapes, May 21, 1972, 10:19–10:34 a.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 690–7)

² In his diary entry for March 22, Haldeman wrote: "P spent the day at the EOB, preparing for his press conference. He had me over at 11:00, reviewing mostly trip plans and general foreign policy questions vis-à-vis our political needs. He wants to be sure that I go to work on Haig and Henry, through him, to make the point that some of the decisions have got to be made on the basis of the effect they'll have on the election. For example, P feels strongly we should go to Poland after the Russian trip, while Henry is equally strongly opposed to that, so we've got to convince Henry that his position isn't right, which may be hard to do. The P's view is that the political benefit here, of a stop there, greatly overrides the risk." (*The Haldeman Diaries: Multimedia Edition*)

69. Backchannel Message From the Presidents' Deputy Assistant for National Security Affairs (Haig) to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, March 23, 1972, 2214Z.

Following is a note received from our friend today. I have told Dwight to avoid confrontation on the Kremlin and the length of stay until you return. He is preparing a recommended position for your use on these two items which he understands you will handle.

Begin text of note:

"The Soviet leadership suggest to fix the duration of President Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union as eight days. If this corresponds with the intentions of the President himself.

In this case the arrival of the President in Moscow could be planned for the second part of the day on May 22, and departure from the USSR—by the end of the day on May 30.

As a third city, besides Moscow and Leningrad, we suggest Baku, from where the President could fly directly to Teheran.

The residence for the President and Mrs. Nixon will be in the Kremlin.

A separate appropriate program will be prepared for Mrs. Nixon in accordance with her wishes."

Warm regards.

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 10. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only. Sent from the White House to the Embassy in Mexico City. Kissinger remained on vacation in Acapulco through March 27. According to a notation on the original, Dobrynin delivered it to Haig on March 23. (Ibid.)

70. Notes of Meeting¹

Washington, March 27, 1972, 11–11:45 a.m.

Meeting with Dobrynin, Monday, March 27, 1972, 11:00–11:45 a.m.

SUBJECT

Patolichev Mission

1. Timing

Based upon my telephone conversation with him last week, he said he had done some preliminary checking and the situation looked quite favorable with regard to the possibility of Patolichev coming over here. We had agreed that I would not give him anything in writing and would try to be as general as possible with regard to the specific content of the agenda.

Also, it seemed to me desirable to give us enough time to prepare ourselves for this visit and we spent the first part of the meeting discussing possible dates. I gave him the general period between April 27 and May 10 as the best period from the standpoint of my own calendar. We're thinking in terms of a visit that lasts no more than a week and, hopefully, several days.

2. Agenda

Having settled this, I then asked him when he would like to talk about it. He immediately said that as per our last meeting he would like to have a clear understanding of the specific items that would be discussed at this session and what the purpose of the session would be. He says his government feels that after the Patolichev–Stans visit and the visit here earlier this year, there has been a lot of ventilation of what the issues are. He thinks the time has come to work out at least a set of possible scenarios on when progress might be made on what issues and under what circumstances. I told him this did not mean that he would get specific decisions at this meeting or even the Summit meeting on

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 718, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Vol. XX, March 1972. Secret. In an attached March 28 covering note transmitting the meeting notes to Kissinger and Flanigan, Peterson wrote: "The attached report on my meeting with Dobrynin on March 27 should speak for itself. It covers the (1) timing of such a trip; (2) agenda; (3) joint ventures; and (4) the U.S.–Soviet Commercial Commission. During the course of the visit, he mentioned the lend-lease negotiations were to begin on April 6 or 7. I had not realized they would begin so soon and will try to get our proposals done prior to that time." Peterson outlined the purpose of the Patolichev visit in a March 22 memorandum to Kissinger and Flanigan. (Ibid., Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 10)

some of the questions he would like answers to. Rather, we might be able at least to lay out what the obstacles are and what the various possibilities might be for resolving them, including timing scenarios.

He then launched into illustrative kinds of items that he would like to have discussed and started with MFN, to which I said nothing. It is obviously something that will come up and I think we have to have at least thought through what we do say about this issue.

He then went to financing. I simply said that we would be prepared to discuss the issues which arise in conjunction with financing but that I very much want Patolichev to elaborate further on the question of “reciprocal credits” that he has brought up before. Dobrynin asked for an elaboration on this and I indicated that Patolichev indicated that he might be willing to explore allowing this credit equivalent to what they bought and Dobrynin said, well, that would depend, obviously, on what we were able and willing to buy from them. I indicated that I understood this, but I wanted to be sure that we understand what the reciprocal credit arrangements might involve as we should be prepared to discuss the problems and possibilities on Ex-Im financing.

We then discussed the whole business office Kama River Purchasing Commission question which he said had been brought up before. I told him the corollary point to that, of course, was what American companies could do in the Soviet. He said that in principle they were willing to let us have company offices over there, but that it was important that we specify which companies and that the presence of those companies have a legitimate commercial trading interest in the Soviet. I then said perhaps one of the things we could think through is what the *criteria* might be for the placing of offices in the Soviet. He said that would be his thought and that also could we, perhaps, think of a specific list of companies that might want offices over there—again emphasizing that there should be good and practical reasons—or I should say “commercial” reasons for being there.

I then mentioned the tax treaty possibility. He said he was not very aware of that. I said that it was something that Treasury would have an interest in and it has to do with a variety of subjects, but some might well include the question of payments of income, royalty income for instance for technology. He said he would look into that.

The next subject I mentioned was tourism since it had been mentioned before and it is of specific interest to this Department. He said one of their problems was certain “natural restrictions” such as the lack of facilities—hotels and convention facilities and things of that sort. We agreed it could be a subject for discussion.

I then mentioned arbitration and the agreements on how we would handle commercial disagreements and he said “yes”, he thought that was something that should be discussed.

I mentioned the copyrights and patents arena and he understood that.

He then mentioned “joint ventures”.

3. *Joint Ventures*

He mentioned joint ventures and I told him that I thought we should be prepared to at least discuss in this first meeting *how* we would go about approaching joint ventures. I said in my preliminary exploration of this issue it seemed to me that we were probably talking about two phases. There was the first phase of any joint venture of exploring, in depth, the *feasibility* of the project and whether it, indeed did make good economic and technical sense. The second phase was the actual carrying out of the project. I said that we might well talk about how we would approach the phase one aspects since there would be considerable cost involved and there would be important questions that would have to be reviewed as to how to go about sharing them. In this meeting, while he mentioned gas in his example, I did not get the sense that they were preoccupied as the one case they wanted to put all their emphasis on. He later mentioned copper, chrome, oil, and other metals. I am having, over here, work done now on how we might approach some of these other projects where I suspect the US dollar exposure might be far less.

What he did emphasize, however, was the need for their coming up with an *example* or a prototype as to how the United States and Russia could handle joint ventures. In other words, they wanted a case study from which we could go from the general to the specific.²

His continuing discussion of these joint ventures makes clear two things. First, if we are at all concerned about the prognosis on the gas deals (and I am waiting for Peter Flanigan's office to give me any further indications that he has as a kind of joint effort with a Commerce group on the prognosis of the LP gas possibilities). Second, we should get other people from these other fields in to see what the prospects and problems might be there so that we haven't put all of our emphasis just on the LP gas possibility.

² In a March 22 memorandum to Flanigan, Peterson wrote: “In putting together and analyzing material on subjects we need to discuss with Patolichev, I have found that we need to know much more about what institutional arrangements and mechanisms other countries have to handle economic and commercial relations with the Soviets. Specifically, what I have in mind is to send a small group to Europe next week to investigate systematically how the major Western Europe countries conduct their trade relations with the Soviets. If we are to proceed after the Summit with a kind of joint U.S./Soviet commercial mission, we need the best information that we can get on what others are now doing.” (Ibid.)

I'll see if we can't get some forward motion with people who might have an interest in copper, chrome, oil, etc. so we can better understand what Phase I would amount to on these other ventures as well as the kinds of dollar exposure we might be talking about. Also, we need to think through what an approach might be on these joint ventures that can form the basis of my discussion with Patolichev. For example, we have talked about the possibility of Ex-Im insuring Phase I if that became necessary and desirable to get US companies involved in the process. It may well be that our starting position should be some kind of sharing of these costs with the Soviets until we decide whether to go ahead with Phase II. Whatever we decide, I think the joint ventures are something that Kosygin is very much interested in and we should be prepared to at least discuss how we want to approach them.

4. *US-Soviet Commercial Commission*

Dobrynin then brought up this Commercial Commission and we agreed, as we did before, that this meeting should be devoted partly to clarifying what we mean by those commissions. He indicated to me that France and the Soviet Union had something very analogous to this. I think we should explore that one very carefully so we understand what it is all about. As we now see it, part of the Commercial Commission would be to lay out the terms of the trade agreements as well as to make specific studies of whatever important matters come up in the commercial area.

All this seemed quite agreeable and I did not give him any papers at all. After some chit chat about how my wife and I should come over and visit the granddaughter who is now staying with them, we agreed that the next step was up to him on the question of dates.³

Peter G. Peterson⁴

³ On March 30 Kissinger met with both Peterson and Flanigan to discuss the next steps in discussions over trade. (Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule) No record of the meeting has been found, but Sonnenfeldt briefed Kissinger for this meeting in a March 29 memorandum, which advised Kissinger to “tell Peterson that next time he sees Dobrynin it should be to get replies to Peterson’s last presentation. No further U.S. initiative except to agree to Patolichev date, until we have an agreed agenda in our government.” (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 718, Country Files, Europe, U.S.S.R., Vol. XX, March 1972)

⁴ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

71. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between President Nixon and his Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)¹

Washington, March 27, 1972, 8:25 p.m.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to the Moscow summit.]

K: We have to get the summit in shape.²

P: Well, we have kept everything in limbo for the last week.

K: I notice now that Dobrynin has surfaced those things in official channels.

P: He has?

K: He has been playing the game and kept it divided among various departments.

P: Right.

K: I will see him this Thursday.³ I just spoke to Haig briefly. On the Middle East, get it done before the election and brutalize them after the election.

P: That secret deal still concerns me.

K: That's the problem—not to do it at the summit but conclude it a little later. There will be less time for it to blow.

P: That might be but I don't want to raise the opportunity—

K: We have made very concrete propositions to them. It is now up to them. We have got to get the Soviets out of the Middle East.

P: We can talk about it. We need to get a plan to know what we are going to do. That is one area we want to take charge of the policy and run it our own way. State is looking at it in terms of just the Middle East. We are looking at it in terms of the Soviets.

K: That's it.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to the Moscow summit.]

¹ Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Kissinger Papers, Box 371, Telephone Conversations, Chronological File. No classification marking.

² In his diary entry for March 29, Haldeman recorded: "K was in talking about the Russian trip and the problems of whether we stay at the Kremlin or not, how many days we stay in Russia, and all that sort of thing. The P also raised the point of whether he ought to speak to the Russian people on television as Eisenhower did, or was going to do and Nixon actually did." (*The Haldeman Diaries: Multimedia Edition*)

³ March 30; see Document 76.

72. Note From Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev to President Nixon¹

Moscow, March 27, 1972.

Dear Mr. President:

I would like to express some further considerations in continuation of our correspondence, having in mind your letter of last February 15² and the conversation with our Ambassador in Washington on March 17.³

I and my colleagues likewise closely follow the course of preparation for the May meeting in Moscow as well as all the events attendant to that preparation.

Now, when the range of questions to be discussed at the meeting has, in the main, taken shape and we have agreed on the manner of their preparation, the principal thing is to elicit, through preliminary exchange of views on the substance of the questions, actual possibilities for reaching agreement on them. Such exchange of views on a number of questions is already under way.

Both in public statements and confidentially we repeatedly outlined our views and put forward certain specific proposals on problems concerning Europe. We understand the readiness expressed by you to a confidential exchange of opinion on this score, in such a way that in the course of the preparation for the meeting appropriate specific considerations will be expressed by the American side as well.

You, Mr. President, noted on a number of occasions the great significance of the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin. Such is our appraisal of that agreement, too. Its entry into force will indeed make a major step on the way to strengthening the *détente* and ensuring security in Europe. It is clear at the same time that the agreement on West Berlin is inseparable from other European problems and, above all, from the entry into force of the treaties of the Soviet Union and Poland with the FRG. We therefore believe it very important for all the participants of the quadripartite agreement on West Berlin, including the United States, to actively facilitate, with all the means at

¹ Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 493, President's Trip Files, Dobrynin/Kissinger, 1972, Vol. 10. No classification marking. A notation on the note reads: "Handed to K by D at 12:45 p.m., 3/28/72." According to his schedule, Kissinger met with Dobrynin in the Map Room at the White House from 12:55 to 1:20 p.m. (Library of Congress, Kissinger Papers, Box 438, Miscellany, 1968–1976, Record of Schedule) No record of the meeting has been found.

² See Document 51.

³ See Document 62.

their disposal, completion of the ratification of the above treaties with West Germany.

I want to use this occasion to emphasize anew the positive significance of the fact that both the Soviet Union and the United States have worked hard enough to make their contribution to the attainment of the above agreement on West Berlin.

I and my colleagues attach special significance as you do, Mr. President, to the forthcoming discussion in Moscow on the questions of strategic arms limitation. We would like to hope that the discussion on those questions will be constructive and yield concrete positive results. Of course, this will require maximum joint efforts to be applied in the remaining period so as to find a mutually acceptable solution based on the principle of equal security for both sides.

I think it is quite realistic. Let us take a question on which a proximity of positions has already emerged—that of cessation, beginning from July 1, 1972, of new construction of silo launchers for land-based ICBMs. This would mean that for a specified period the sides would not increase the number of such launchers which each of them would have as of the date of the beginning of the “freeze”. The time-period to be established could be lengthier, namely—three years, while in the meantime, as agreed, further active negotiations would be pursued on strategic arms limitation. An agreement on such a “freeze” should not, of course, involve the possibility for modernization and replacement of appropriate weapons on which there already exists agreement between the two sides.

Conclusion of such an agreement on “freeze”, along with a treaty on limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems—and here our positions have drawn nearer as well—would be such an important step in the relations between our countries, that its significance can hardly be overestimated. That fact would undoubtedly make a profound favorable impact both in our countries and in the whole world.

As for the considerations transmitted by you with regard to fixing, on a temporary basis, appropriate levels concerning submarines with ballistic missiles, we are carefully studying those considerations with due account of all related factors, whose complexity, it seems, you also recognize, and we shall inform you of our opinion.

We hope to be able soon to let you know our more detailed considerations on the Middle East settlement elaborating on the basic scheme that was talked over with you last fall. We consider this problem very important both internationally and from the point of view of its impact on the relations directly between our countries. In the absence of its radical, and also without any delay, solution the danger in that area will not only persist but will increase. And with that danger there, our relations will, for understandable reasons, be subject to risk

with insuing unpredictable consequences. It is clear that such a prospect would not be in the interests of either the United States, or the Soviet Union and would constantly overshadow the relations between them.

On the other hand, a speedy settlement of the Middle East conflict with active support by our two countries, would bring about a long-awaited peace to the peoples of that region, would remove a source of dangerous tension. Such a turn of affairs would have very favorable consequences for the Soviet-American relations as well.

In conclusion I would like to emphasize again the importance of a situation in which our talks are prepared and will be held in Moscow. On that, of course, in many respects will depend the results of the negotiations themselves. Making conditions most suitable for our meeting should in an equal degree be a concern of both sides. Therefore, I would like to tell you frankly, Mr. President, that continued bombings of the DRV—which, as I wrote to you in my previous letter, push the developments in Vietnam in a direction opposite to peaceful settlement—can only complicate the situation. We hope that you will weigh all aspects of this question.

Sincerely,

L. Brezhnev⁴

⁴ Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.